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# The Role of Peer Counseling Services in Addressing Juvenile Delinquency among High School Students

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Student delinquency is a persistent issue that affects the learning environment and overall student development. It can disrupt academic progress, harm peer relationships, and contribute to long-term behavioral problems. **Objective:** This study aims to investigate the influence of peer counseling on student delinquency. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether peer-based interventions can serve as an effective strategy for reducing delinquent behavior among high school students. **Method:** A correlational research design was employed at SMA Kartika I-2 Medan in 2022, with a sample of 40 students. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through statistical methods to examine the relationship between peer counseling and student delinquency. **Result:** The results revealed that peer counseling does not have a significant impact on reducing student delinquency. Instead, other influential factors were identified, including the family environment, school climate, personal motivation, and broader social conditions. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that peer counseling alone is insufficient as an intervention for addressing student delinquency. More comprehensive strategies are required to tackle the root causes of delinquent behavior. **Contribution:** The findings contribute to the field of educational psychology and counseling by emphasizing the importance of multi-faceted intervention approaches.

## KEYWORDS

Juvenile delinquency; Peer counseling; High School Students

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, students often communicate and interact with their peers both at school and outside of school. Often their schoolmates are classmates and relatively the same age or can be called peers (Kurniawan & Sudrajat, 2017). Peers often have an impact on student development not only in positive ways but sometimes also negative impact on students (Hidayati, 2016; Yanti & Marimin,

2017; Sulfemi & Yasita, 2020; Sartika & Yandri, 2019). There is a lot that students can learn from peers, especially about their relationships, school, and daily life. But what is unfortunate is that sometimes peers hurt life which is often referred to as student delinquency (Mawardah & Adiyanti, 2014). Which is usually synonymous with drugs, student brawls, alcohol, and even the worst in life is free

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sex, and that includes violating the norms and laws in our country.

Talking about peer groups and socialization is very interesting. Why, because the author will find out to what extent students' peers influence the development of personality and social mobility in a society (Utami, 2018). Peer groups are the second environment after the family, which affects individual lives (Utomo & Pahlevi, 2022). Whether or not individuals are affected by peers depends on the individual's perception of the group, because the individual's perception of the peer group will determine the decisions taken later (Nuryani & Paramata, 2018). Student delinquency is often identified with negative things (Wahyuni, 2016). Indeed, this term is adapted from Western culture where people are free to do the above things without fear of violating the norms that exist in society (Iskandar & Rahmayanti, 2018). In contrast to Eastern culture, which considers all of these things to be uncertain, the author often hears the phrase "stay away from promiscuity". Student delinquency is not only limited to that.

Peers are children of similar maturity or age. One of the most important functions of peer groups is to provide a source of information and comparisons about the world outside the family (Korir & Kipkemboi, 2014). Through peer groups, children receive feedback from their peers about their abilities. Children assess what they are doing, whether they are better than their peers, the same, or worse than what other children are doing. This can be difficult to do within the family as siblings are usually older or younger (Santrock, 2004). Good relationships among peers will greatly help the normal development of children's social aspects. Quiet children who are rejected by their peers, and feel lonely are at risk of suffering from depression. Children who are aggressive towards peers are at risk of developing several problems such as delinquency and dropping out of school.

Many factors cause student delinquency. One that will be discussed is student delinquency caused by environmental factors (Yaqin, 2016; Gularso & Indrianawati, 2022). A social environment is a place or atmosphere where a group of peers (Tamara, 2016). One factor that influences student delinquency, namely peer influence, can shape student delinquent behavior due to students having strong pressures from peers for students to conform to social behavior in the group (Dongoran & Boiliu, 2020). Some students will do anything so that they can be included as members of the group including committing delinquent acts.

The strength of peer influence that leads students to be naughty or not is also determined by how students perceive their peers (Rahmayanthi, 2017). The amount of negative peer influence in the search for self-identity can lead to failure, resulting in behavior that is not acceptable to the social environment or society (Astuti, 2018). Stu-

dent life is never separated from peers (Aprihastanto, 2012). Peers as people are very important in student life (Falalah, 2014). Students usually have more acquaintances through peers. Students have a very strong need to be liked and accepted by their peers or groups, peers play an important role in students' lives.

Most acts of student delinquency that occur are carried out in groups or it can be said that a student follows the influence of peers (Permata & Nasution, 2022). A large number of students who commit acts of student delinquency such as smoking, skipping school, absenteeism, fighting teacher rules, stealing, and spending school money to the stage of criminal student delinquency such as brawls, open mugging, drug and drug abuse, and free sex (Pardede et al., 2023). Student conformity can be caused because students are outside the home with their peers as a group, so, understandably, the influence of peers on attitudes, speech, interests, appearance, and behavior is greater than the influence of family (Azizah et al., 2023). As a consequence, the influence of peers requires students to be able to adjust in all ways there is a group.

Based on the reality in the field, there are many deviant behaviors carried out by students and their peers, and we are increasingly encountering them in everyday life, these behaviors include skipping school hours, disrupting learning activities, free sex, and grouping in the form of groups (gangs). This student behavior is deviant behavior towards the norms that apply in society.

Most of the students at SMA Kartika I-2 Medan do the above, due to the lack of control from the school, so these events can occur, one of which is skipping school. What happens when skipping school is the aggressive behavior of an individual or group in the sense of their peers.

Student delinquency in the study of social problems can be categorized into deviant behavior (Rosyidah & Nurdin, 2018). From the perspective of deviant behavior, social problems occur because there are deviations in behavior from various social rules or applicable social values and norms (Marlynda, 2017). Deviant behavior can be considered a source of problems because it can endanger the establishment of the social system (Sa'idah, 2019). The use of the concept of deviant behavior implies that there is a standard path that must be taken (Yuniati, 2017). Behavior that does not go through this path means that it has deviated. Student delinquency actions can occur in groups, peer groups also play an important role in student life (Anggita, 2021). Students want to be accepted and seen as members of the peer group, both at school and outside school (Risal & Alam, 2021). Students will feel miserable if one day they are not accepted or even alienated by their peers. Suffering will be deep and tends to act into delinquency.

To find out the background of deviant behavior, it is necessary to distinguish between unintentional and inten-

tional deviant behavior, including because the perpetrator does not understand the existing rules. Meanwhile, deviant behavior that is intentional is not because the perpetrator does not know the rules. The relevant thing to understand in this form of behavior is why someone deviates, while he knows what he is doing violates the rules. Noting the case that occurred above, the role of the peer group is very important in the association of students, which has been mentioned above as part of student delinquency.

Based on the description of the background of the problem, the authors formulate problem identification as the existence of truant behavior that is often carried out by students of SMA Kartika I-2 Medan, there are also some of the students who do not attend lessons and at that time are in the canteen while class hours are running, almost every day there are always students who are late for various reasons and with the peer group itself. From the above factors, it can be explained that student delinquency depends on the student's peer group, if one of the delinquencies arises in the group, it will be certain that the student's delinquency will grow.

While peer counseling is widely studied in adolescent development, its direct impact on juvenile delinquency remains unclear. Existing research focuses on its benefits for emotional well-being and academics but rarely examines its effectiveness in reducing delinquent behavior. Many studies overlook contextual factors like school environment, family background, and socio-economic conditions, as well as potential limitations such as inadequate training for peer counselors. This study addresses these gaps by evaluating peer counseling as an intervention for delinquency while considering external influences, emphasizing the need for a more integrated approach to student behavioral support.

This study aims to determine the effect of the role of peer counseling and its effect on student delinquency. The author takes the title as a rationale, namely based on the current reality that many school students are influenced by their friends. Because students tend to feel comfortable being with their peers rather than being with adults, even though these adults are accepting and understanding.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach, which is research that emphasizes using numerical analysis or statistical tests. The research method uses a correlation study, which is research conducted by collecting several data to find out and determine whether there is a relationship between two or more variables to measure how much the level of relationship between the two variables being measured is. Correlation is one of the statistical data analysis techniques used to find the relationship between two

or more variables that are quantitative. Two or more variables are said to be correlated if changes in one variable will be followed by changes in the other variable regularly in the same direction (positive correlation) or opposite (negative correlation) (Ibrahim et al., 2018).

Correlation studies are used by researchers to determine the effect of the role of peer counseling and its effect on student delinquency, researchers try to describe the current conditions in a quantitative context reflected in the research variables.

### 2.2 Place of Research

This research was conducted at SMA Kartika I-2 Medan in 2022. The research sample amounted to 40 students. Sampling was carried out through the purposive sampling technique, which is a sampling technique based on the researcher's consideration of which samples are most suitable, useful, and considered to represent a population (representative).

This sampling technique tends to have higher sample quality, this is because the researcher has made a grid or boundary based on certain criteria that will be used as a research sample.

### 2.3 Instrument Validity and Reliability

Validity is done to determine the level of validity of the instrument. A valid instrument means that the measuring instrument used to obtain data (measure) is valid. A reliability validity test is needed in scientific research which is the basis for trusting that the instrument is worth using in research.

The reliability test is used to determine the consistency of the measuring instrument, whether the measuring instrument used is reliable, and remains consistent if the measurement is repeated. In this case, a measuring instrument is said to have high reliability or trustworthiness if the measuring instrument is steady and stable, reliable and predictable, and able to reveal the same or appropriate data several times given to respondents so that the results are accurate.

### 2.4 Data Collection

The data collection steps in this study include (1) the preparation stage. This preparation stage includes making a research permit from the faculty which is then submitted to the intended school. The research time was obtained by agreement between the researcher and the school, which in this case was represented by the guidance and counseling coordinator. Following sample considerations, it was agreed that the time used was incidental with prior notice; (2) implementation stage. The implementation of research and data collection was carried out directly. Implementation is carried out periodically starting with distributing questionnaires, then collecting data.

2.5 Data Analysis

The statistical analysis technique uses Pearson product-moment correlation with the help of the SPSS program. Furthermore, before data analysis is carried out, the assumption test will first be carried out on the research results which include correlation and linearity tests. Correlation testing is carried out to determine whether there is a correlation between each variable, namely the independent and dependent variables. The linearity test is used to determine whether the distribution of research data, namely the independent variable of parental attention and the dependent variable of learning discipline has a linear relationship.

After obtaining the results of the correlation coefficient between variable X and variable Y or obtaining the  $r_{\text{value}}$ , the next step is to correlate the  $r_{\text{value}}$  (the result of the correlation coefficient) with the  $r_{\text{value}}$  in the product moment table list (for 5% and 1% significance lists). When the  $r$  value resulting from the correlation coefficient is equal to or greater than the  $r$  value in the table, the results obtained are significant, which means that the proposed hypothesis can be accepted. Conversely, if the  $r$  value is in the product moment table, the results obtained are non-significant, which means that the hypothesis used is rejected, based on the significance level we use (ie 5% or 1%).

Table 1. Simple Linear Regression Statistical Test Results

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.
1	(Constant)	19.312	3.548		5.444
	Teman_Sebaya	.118	.160	.118	.734

a. Dependent Variable: Student\_Delinquency

3.1.3 Hypothesis Test Results

Based on statistical analysis, a coefficient of 0.118 was obtained for the  $r_{\text{table}}$  coefficient at the 5% significance level of = 0.320. Or in other words, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) which reads that there is no influence of peer groups on the level of delinquency of students of SMA Kartika I-2 Medan is "accepted", and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which states that there is an influence of peer groups on the level of student delinquency is "rejected".

3.2 Discussion

The results of the study, show that there is no relationship between the peer group relationships on the level of delinquency of high school students Kartika I-2 Medan. This is evidenced by the calculation obtained  $r_{\text{count}} 0.118 < r_{\text{xy table}} 0.320$  at the 5% significance level.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

3.1.1 Description of Research Data

An overview of the scoring results and the total score of the student peer group variable at SMA Kartika I-2 Medan obtained an average score of 22 and the highest score of 26 while the lowest score was 16. While an overview of the scoring results and the total score of the student delinquency variable obtained an average score of 21.97 and the highest score of 26 while the lowest score was 19.

Based on the results of the Pearson Correlation analysis, it was concluded that the result was 0.118. This figure indicates a very weak correlation. This means that the large peer group variable has no relationship to the level of student delinquency. Based on the results of the above analysis, it can be concluded that the correlation between peer groups and student delinquency is not significant.

3.1.2 Simple Linear Regression test results

A simple Linear Regression Test is conducted to determine how much influence peer groups have on student delinquency in students. the results of linear regression analysis are presented in the table 1 below:

While the amount of influence given by peer groups on the level of student delinquency is 14%. This means that there is no linear relationship between peer groups and student delinquency. So it can be concluded that peer groups do not influence student delinquency.

3.2.1 The Role of Peer counseling

The results of the study reveal that there is no effect of friend groups on student delinquency, this indicates that peer groups are friendship groups that have their values and life patterns, where friendship in the peer period is very important because it is the primary basis for realizing values in social contact. So the peer group is a medium for students to realize their social values in carrying out the principles of cooperation, responsibility, and competition. Peer groups are an important sociali-



zation institution besides the family because peer groups also participate in teaching the ways of social life.

Peer groups are a collection of two or more people who are interrelated, interact and influence each other in behavior to achieve common goals (Anggreni & Rudiarta, 2022). Each group has its own rules, explicit or implicit, has its social system, and has its expectations for its members. Each peer group also has its habits, traditions, behavior, and even language. Peer groups are important socialization institutions besides the family because peer groups also participate in teaching the ways of social life (Anggreni & Rudiarta, 2022). Usually between the ages of four and seven years the social world of students changes radically, from a small world centered on the family to a wider world centered on peer groups (Follona et al., 2014). Students tend to feel more comfortable being with their peers than with adults, even if those adults are accepting and understanding.

Peers are children of similar maturity or age. One of the most important functions of peer groups is to provide a source of information and comparisons about the world outside the family. Through peer groups, children receive feedback from their peers about their abilities. Children assess what they are doing, whether they are better than their peers, the same, or worse than what other children are doing. This can be difficult to do within the family as siblings are usually older or younger (Santrock, 2004). Good relationships among peers will greatly help the normal development of children's social aspects. Quiet children who are rejected by their peers, and feel lonely are at risk of suffering from depression. Children who are aggressive towards peers are at risk of developing some problems such as delinquency and dropping out of school.

Conformity to peer influence can have both positive and negative effects (Laursen & Veenstra, 2023). Some negative conformity behaviors include using profanity, stealing, vandalizing, and playing tricks on parents and teachers. However, not all conformity to peer groups contains negative behaviors. Conformity to peers contains the desire to be involved in the world of the peer group such as dressing the same as friends and spending part of their time with group members (Kornienko et al., 2016). During adolescence, the closeness of relationships with peers increases dramatically, and at the same time, the closeness of adolescent relationships with parents decreases dramatically.

Considering the important role of peers, developing a positive peer environment is an effective way to support adolescent development. Concerning the benefits of adolescents having a positive peer group, Laursen (2005) states that a positive peer group allows adolescents to feel accepted, allows adolescents to perform catharsis, and allows adolescents to test new values and new views. Peer interaction allows for identification, cooperation,

and collaboration processes. These processes will color the process of forming typical behavior in adolescents. Friendship among peers has an important meaning for adolescents.

A positive peer culture helps adolescents to understand that they are not alone in facing challenges. A positive peer culture can be used to help change adolescents' behaviors and values (Laursen, 2005). One effort that can be made to build a positive peer culture is to develop peer counseling within the adolescent community. Good relationships among peers will greatly help the normal development of children's social aspects. Quiet children who are rejected by their peers, and feel lonely are at risk of suffering from depression. Children who are aggressive towards peers are at risk of developing several problems such as delinquency and dropping out of school.

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Judging from the variety of types, peer groups are classified into several types, namely (1) close friends, students usually have two or three close friends; (2) small friends, this group usually consisting of a group of Dekat friends; (3) large groups, large groups consist of several small groups and close friend groups, developing with increasing interest in parties and dating. Because the group is large, there is less adjustment of interests among its members so that there is a greater social distance between them; (4) organized groups, youth groups fostered by adults, formed by schools and community organizations to meet the social needs of students who do not have large groups. Many students who join such groups feel regulated and lose interest when they are 16-17 years old; (5) gang groups, students who do not belong to large groups and are not satisfied with organized groups, may join gang groups. Members usually consist of similar students and their interest is to deal with rejection of friends through counter social behavior.

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### 3.2.2 Student Delinquency and Causal Factors

The problem with student delinquency is that they are currently mentally easy to fall, and common sense and long thoughts are not used. They only prioritize their own or group's interests or follow their emotions or also rely on their muscles, such as brawls between students and students, and in the end, they feel the consequences are heavy for the family, society, and even the country. The situation is also exacerbated by the flow of Western culture that began to cover polite Eastern culture, and through mass media, such as newspapers or magazines, and electronic media, such as television or the Internet.

Especially in this age of modernization and globalization, this information is increasingly spreading to all corners of the world. Eastern and Indonesian culture is starting to be abandoned and just considered old-fashioned. More and more students have no manners and manners towards friends, even towards parents. All of these problems will cause students to have a bad image in the eyes of the general public.

Judging from the type, student delinquency is divided into three levels; (1) ordinary delinquency, such as fighting, loitering, skipping school, or leaving home without saying goodbye (2) delinquency that leads to offenses and crimes such as stealing, fighting, taking things from parents without permission (3) special delinquency such as drug abuse, extramarital sex, rape. These categories were used as a measure of student delinquency in the study.

Whether delinquent behavior or deviant behavior is normal or not, has been explained in Emile Durkheim's thinking (Marliah et al., 2020). That deviant or evil behavior within certain limits is considered a normal social fact in his book "Rules of Sociological Method" Within certain limits delinquency is normal because it is impossible to eliminate it, thus behavior is said to be normal to the

extent that such behavior does not cause unrest in society, such behavior occurs within certain limits and looks at something that is not intentional (Nisrima et al., 2016). Thus, the opposite of behavior that is considered normal is delinquent or malicious behavior, namely behavior that intentionally leaves unrest in society.

Delinquency committed by adolescents certainly has reasons that cause delinquency to occur (Prasasti, 2017). Perhaps the emergence of juvenile delinquency is not because it is purely from within the teenager himself, but is a side effect of things that cannot be handled by adolescents in their family and environment. Even the parents themselves are unable to handle it, as a result, adolescents become victims of family circumstances. Young, energetic, and potential adolescents who are the hope of families and nations fall into deviant behavior and damage their future. The problem of adolescents is like an iceberg that we do not realize that many teenagers are involved with drugs and alcohol, free sexual behavior (pregnancy outside marriage, abortion, prostitution, and early marriage), brawls, and other juvenile delinquency.

The factors that cause juvenile delinquency are starting from the "naughty" behavior possessed by adolescents: First, the internal factor is one thing that causes adolescents to act a certain way that comes from themselves. The absence of the ability of adolescents to adapt to the surrounding environment so that they will carry out the wrong self-defense by rebelling and fighting. From here, aggressive behavior will arise, violating applicable rules and norms, and crime and violence (Qolbiyyah, 2017).

The most basic cause of juvenile delinquency is environmental factors. The factor that has a big influence and contributes to this discussion is the environment of teenagers. Both family, school, and even social. According to research, the better and more supportive the environment of an individual, the greater the success of that individual. If raised in a good and caring family, teenagers are reluctant to commit crimes because of family love and advice. With a school that is comfortable and has good role models such as great teachers, teenagers certainly do not want to hurt the teacher's feelings and will choose to question what is on their minds to the teacher, rather than doing things that they do not know the consequences of.

Failure of students to master social skills will cause them to have difficulty adjusting to the surrounding environment. So that there is a sense of inferiority, and exclusion from social circles, and tends to behave normatively (for example, asocial or anti-social). Even more extreme, it usually causes mental disorders, student delinquency, criminal acts, and acts of violence, among others, these factors are (1) religious factors; (2) environmental factors such as parents, friends, neighbors, and

the media; (3) lack of strict rules in the school; (4) changing times.

#### 4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

##### 4.1 Research Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for educators, school counselors, and policymakers in addressing juvenile delinquency among high school students. While peer counseling is often regarded as a beneficial approach to fostering emotional and social support, the results indicate that it may not be sufficient as a standalone intervention for reducing delinquent behavior. This suggests the need for a more comprehensive strategy that integrates peer counseling with other support mechanisms, such as parental involvement, teacher guidance, and school-based behavioral programs. Schools should consider enhancing peer counseling programs by incorporating structured training for peer counselors, ensuring that they are equipped with the necessary skills to influence their peers positively. Additionally, collaboration with professional counselors and community organizations can help strengthen the effectiveness of peer counseling in addressing delinquency.

##### 4.2 Research Contributions

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of research on peer influence in adolescent behavior, highlighting the limitations of peer counseling in isolation. Practically, the study provides valuable insights for schools and educators in developing more holistic intervention programs that address the root causes of delinquency. The findings encourage schools to adopt a multi-dimensional approach that includes peer support, family engagement, and behavioral monitoring to create a more conducive environment for student development. Future research should explore additional factors that interact with peer counseling, such as socio-economic conditions and psychological resilience, to develop more effective strategies for preventing juvenile delinquency in high schools.

#### 5. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

##### 5.1 Research Limitations

This study has limitations in the process of conducting research, the following research limitations are presented:

- 1) This study did not conduct an intervention (experiment), and only once carried out the data collection process so the research results were only based on statistical analysis;
- 2) This study does not explain the cause and effect of the relationship between the variables studied, which

only identifies the relationship between one and the other;

- 3) The research implementation time is relatively short, only once the data collection process;
- 4) The number of samples received is still far from what the researcher expects, which is only 40 students.

##### 5.2 Recommendations for Future Research Directions

Future studies could focus on identifying the key components of successful peer counseling programs, such as the training of peer counselors, the role of school support, and the integration of counseling into school policies. Additionally, research could examine how peer counseling influences students' attitudes, decision-making, and behavior change over time. Comparative studies between schools that implement peer counseling and those that do not could provide valuable insights into its impact.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

Peers are the most important place in determining student behavior. Peers are very related to the level of student delinquency, namely, peers have a lot of negative influence on students who make students become undisciplined students in school and do not care about what harms them in the short and long term. The results of the study concluded that there was no relationship between peer group relationships and the level of student delinquency.

Peer counseling services offer an effective approach to managing juvenile delinquency among high school students. By creating a supportive atmosphere, these programs assist students in building self-awareness, enhancing decision-making abilities, and coping with emotional difficulties. The peer-centered model makes counseling more approachable and meaningful, motivating students to seek support and adopt positive behavioral changes. Introducing well-structured peer counseling programs in schools can act as a preventive strategy to curb delinquent behavior. By providing students with essential skills and emotional guidance, these programs foster both personal development and social growth. In the long run, peer counseling contributes to a more positive school environment, encouraging responsible conduct and strengthening relationships among students.

This study finds that while peer counseling supports students emotionally and socially, it has limited impact on reducing juvenile delinquency. Delinquent behavior is influenced by factors like family, school climate, and socio-economic conditions, which peer counseling alone cannot address. The lack of professional training and potential negative peer influences may also limit its effectiveness. A more comprehensive approach, integrating teacher in-

volvement, parental guidance, and professional counseling, is needed.

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### CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript. Yunita: Conceptualization and writing, Paulinus Alexander Satriano Uda: Review and editing.

### Declaration of GenAI in Scientific Writing

The authors declare that Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools were employed in the drafting and revision of this manuscript to check spelling and grammar, identify typos, grammatical errors, suggest paraphrases, reduce passive voice, and eliminate repeated words, sentences, and unnecessary adverbs. The suggestions provided by GenAI were critically evaluated and modified to ensure that the final draft remains representative of the authors' own work. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [IJCP Generative AI \(GenAI\) Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this article.

### Ethical Approval Statement

The author declares that this study was conducted in accordance with research ethics principles and has received ethical approval from the author's institution, including respect for participants' autonomy, confidentiality of data, and ensuring their safety and well-being, as outlined in the applicable research ethics guidelines.

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