

## Emotional Maturity and Aggressive Behavior: The Role of Self-Control as a Mediator

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### ABSTRACT

Aggressive behavior among law enforcement personnel, particularly members of the Mobile Brigade (Brimob), is a phenomenon that requires serious attention given the highly demanding nature of their duties. This study aims to examine the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior, with self-control as a mediating variable among Brimob members. The study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design. Data were analyzed using path analysis to test both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results indicate that emotional maturity has a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior and a significant positive effect on self-control. Furthermore, self-control was found to significantly mediate the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior. This study provides theoretical and practical implications for the development of psychological training programs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior is a psychological phenomenon influenced by the interaction between individuals and their work environment, particularly in situations that demand high alertness and rapid responses. Aggression is not only manifested in physical forms but also includes verbal aggression, hostile attitudes, and impulsive tendencies in responding to situational pressures (Allen et al., 2022). In occupational contexts, aggression often emerges when individuals face job demands that exceed their emotional regulation capacity. Recent studies indicate that high-risk occupations exhibit a higher prevalence of aggression compared to administrative or non-operational jobs (Hershcovis et al., 2021). Unmanaged aggression can negatively affect performance, mental health, and the quality of workplace relationships. Moreover, aggressive behavior has the potential to undermine public trust in institutions. Therefore, identifying psychological factors that help suppress aggression has become an important issue in contemporary research.

Within the law enforcement profession, the issue of aggressive behavior has become increasingly relevant for scientific investigation. Police officers are frequently exposed to conflict situations, safety threats, and intense public pressure while performing their duties. Chronic exposure to occupational stress has been shown to affect emotional regulation and behavioral responses among officers (Violanti et al., 2022). Research indicates that unmanaged operational stress can increase the tendency toward aggressive reactions in field situations. Beyond its impact on individuals, this condition also affects service quality and institutional professionalism. Recent studies emphasize that the psychological well-being of police officers is closely related to their ability to control aggressive behavior (Purba & Demou, 2021). Thus, aggression among police personnel needs to be understood through a psychological approach grounded in up-to-date empirical evidence.

The Mobile Brigade (Brimob) is a police unit characterized by extreme and high-risk operational duties. Brimob members are routinely involved in armed conflict security operations, riot control, and high-intensity emergency situations. Such working conditions demand optimal physical and psychological readiness within a short period of time. Recent research shows that repeated exposure to dangerous situations can increase emotional exhaustion and psychological strain among tactical police units (Syed et al., 2023). This pressure may affect emotional stability and behavioral response patterns. Without adequate emotional regulation abilities, individuals become more vulnerable to reactive aggression. Therefore, Brimob members represent a relevant population for examining psychological factors that influence aggressive behavior.

From a theoretical perspective, aggressive behavior is understood as the result of an interaction between situational factors and intrapersonal characteristics. Contemporary aggression models explain that aggression emerges through cognitive and affective processes triggered by environmental stressors (Bushman et al., 2021). In policing contexts, situational factors such as provocation and threats are often unavoidable. Consequently, individual characteristics become decisive in controlling aggressive responses. Psychological factors such as emotional regulation, impulse control, and affective stability play critical roles. Individuals with low emotional regulation capacity tend to display more impulsive aggressive responses. Therefore, research focus should be directed toward internal factors that function as protective mechanisms against aggression.

One internal factor that has received considerable attention over the past five years is emotional maturity. Emotional maturity refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions adaptively in accordance with situational demands. Emotionally mature individuals are able to maintain affective stability even under high-pressure conditions (Suri & Verma, 2022). Emotional maturity is also associated with self-reflection and the regulation of negative emotions. Recent empirical studies show that emotional maturity is negatively related to aggressive behavior and interpersonal conflict (Kumar & Dixit, 2023). Individuals with high emotional maturity tend to be more tolerant of provocation. In the policing context, emotional maturity constitutes an important psychological asset in maintaining professionalism.

Nevertheless, the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior is not always direct. Contemporary literature emphasizes the importance of psychological mechanisms that explain this relationship. One widely examined mechanism is self-control. Self-control is defined as an individual's ability to regulate impulses, emotions, and behaviors in accordance with internal standards and situational demands (Duckworth et al., 2021). Individuals with high self-control are better able to restrain aggressive impulses even under pressure. In high-risk situations, self-control functions as a buffer against impulsive reactions. Recent research indicates that low self-control is positively correlated with aggressive behavior (Li et al., 2022).

In the context of law enforcement professions, self-control is a crucial psychological competence. Police officers are required to act decisively yet proportionately in emotionally intense situations. Self-control enables individuals to consider consequences before acting. Recent studies demonstrate that self-control contributes to more adaptive and ethical decision-making among security personnel (Arble et al., 2023). Conversely, low self-control increases the risk of disproportionate aggressive behavior. In tactical units such as Brimob, this capability becomes even more essential. Therefore, self-control deserves to be positioned as a key variable in aggression models.

The relationship between emotional maturity and self-control has also gained attention in research over the past five years. Emotionally mature

individuals tend to possess better self-control capacity. Emotional maturity allows individuals to recognize emotions before responding impulsively. This process provides space for self-control to guide behavior adaptively. Longitudinal studies indicate that emotional maturity predicts improvements in self-control in the context of occupational stress (Zhou et al., 2021). This relationship becomes particularly significant in high-pressure professions. Thus, self-control can be understood as a psychological mechanism that bridges the influence of emotional maturity on aggression.

However, empirical studies examining the mediating role of self-control remain relatively limited. Most recent research emphasizes the direct relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior. Self-control is often treated as an independent predictor rather than an intervening variable. In addition, most studies have been conducted on general populations or students. Research focusing on law enforcement personnel, particularly tactical units such as Brimob, remains scarce (Bishopp et al., 2022). Yet, the extreme nature of their duties may influence distinct psychological dynamics. This gap indicates a significant research opportunity.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to examine the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior among Brimob members, with self-control as a mediating variable. This study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying aggression among law enforcement personnel. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of aggression models based on emotional regulation and self-control. Practically, the findings may serve as a basis for developing psychological training programs for Brimob members. This study hypothesizes that emotional maturity is negatively related to aggressive behavior. In addition, emotional maturity is predicted to be positively related to self-control. Self-control is further hypothesized to mediate the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Aggressive Behavior Theory*

Aggressive behavior is commonly conceptualized as a behavioral response resulting from the interaction between situational stressors and individual psychological characteristics. According to the **General Aggression Model (GAM)**, aggression emerges through cognitive, affective, and arousal processes that are activated by environmental inputs and internal states (Bushman et al., 2021). In high-risk occupations such as law enforcement, situational triggers—including provocation, perceived threats, and time pressure—are frequently unavoidable, increasing the likelihood of aggressive responses if not adequately regulated.

Empirical studies demonstrate that individuals exposed to chronic occupational stress are more vulnerable to aggressive behavior, particularly when emotional regulation resources are insufficient (Hershcovis et al., 2021). In

policing contexts, aggressive behavior not only affects individual well-being but also undermines organizational professionalism and public trust. Recent findings indicate that unmanaged aggression among police officers is associated with reduced job performance, increased complaints, and ethical violations (Purba & Demou, 2021). Therefore, identifying psychological factors that can suppress or regulate aggression is essential.

Based on this theoretical foundation, aggressive behavior among Brimob members is viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by both situational demands and internal psychological capacities.

**H1:** Emotional maturity has a negative effect on aggressive behavior among Brimob members.

### **Emotional Maturity Theory**

Emotional maturity refers to an individual's ability to understand, manage, and express emotions in an adaptive and socially appropriate manner. Emotionally mature individuals are characterized by emotional awareness, affective stability, and the ability to regulate emotional reactions under stress (Suri & Verma, 2022). In high-pressure environments, emotional maturity enables individuals to respond rationally rather than impulsively.

Recent empirical evidence suggests that emotional maturity is negatively associated with aggressive behavior and interpersonal conflict. Individuals with higher emotional maturity demonstrate greater tolerance toward provocation and are less likely to engage in hostile or impulsive actions (Kumar & Dixit, 2023). In occupational settings, emotional maturity has been identified as a protective psychological resource that enhances resilience and adaptive coping strategies. Within law enforcement professions, emotional maturity is particularly critical. Police officers routinely encounter emotionally charged situations requiring rapid yet controlled responses. Studies indicate that officers with higher emotional maturity exhibit better judgment, emotional regulation, and professionalism in the field (Violanti et al., 2022). Thus, emotional maturity plays a central role in suppressing aggressive tendencies.

**H2:** Emotional maturity has a positive effect on self-control among Brimob members.

### **Self-Control Theory**

Self-control is defined as the capacity to regulate impulses, emotions, and behaviors in accordance with internal standards and situational demands (Duckworth et al., 2021). Self-control theory posits that individuals with strong self-regulatory abilities are better equipped to inhibit impulsive and aggressive behaviors, even under conditions of stress or provocation.

Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong negative relationship between self-control and aggressive behavior. Individuals with low self-control are more prone to react impulsively and aggressively, particularly in emotionally intense situations (Li et al., 2022). Conversely, high self-control allows individuals to evaluate consequences before acting and to align behavior with professional and ethical standards.

In the context of law enforcement, self-control is considered a core psychological competency. Tactical police units such as Brimob require personnel to maintain composure and proportional responses during high-risk operations. Recent research confirms that self-control contributes to ethical decision-making, reduced use of excessive force, and improved behavioral outcomes among security personnel (Arble et al., 2023).

**H3:** Self-control has a negative effect on aggressive behavior among Brimob members.

### **Self-Control as a Mediating Mechanism**

Contemporary self-regulation theories emphasize that emotional capacities influence behavior through self-control mechanisms. Emotional maturity enhances an individual's ability to recognize and process emotional experiences, thereby facilitating effective impulse regulation (Gross, 2021). This process suggests that the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior may not be purely direct.

Recent empirical studies indicate that emotional maturity positively predicts self-control, which in turn reduces aggressive tendencies (Zhou et al., 2021). However, research examining self-control as a mediating variable remains limited, particularly in high-risk occupational settings. Most existing studies focus on student or general populations and rarely investigate tactical law enforcement units (Bishopp et al., 2022).

Given the extreme operational demands faced by Brimob members, self-control is likely to play a crucial mediating role in translating emotional maturity into adaptive behavioral outcomes. Positioning self-control as a mediator provides a more comprehensive explanation of how internal emotional capacities influence aggression control.

**H4:** Self-control mediates the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior among Brimob members.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Based on the theoretical and empirical literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which emotional maturity directly influences aggressive behavior and indirectly influences aggressive behavior through self-control. Emotional maturity is expected to enhance self-control, which subsequently suppresses aggressive tendencies. This framework integrates emotional regulation theory and self-control theory to explain aggressive behavior among Brimob members in high-risk operational contexts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationships among emotional maturity, self-control, and

aggressive behavior among members of the Mobile Brigade (Brimob). The quantitative approach was chosen because it allows objective measurement of variables through numerical data and statistical analysis. A correlational design was used to identify the direction and strength of relationships among variables without manipulating the research variables. This study was non-experimental and conducted at a single point in time (cross-sectional). In addition, this design was used to test the role of self-control as a mediating variable in the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior. Thus, the research design is aligned with the study objectives and the proposed conceptual framework. All research procedures were conducted in accordance with the principles of quantitative research.

The population of this study consisted of all Brimob personnel assigned to Region X. From this population, a research sample of 287 Brimob personnel was determined. The sample size was established by considering population representativeness and the adequacy of sample size for correlational and mediation analyses. The sampling technique used was random sampling, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent. This technique was chosen to minimize sampling bias and enhance the external validity of the study. Through random sampling, the sample characteristics were expected to proportionally represent the research population. Therefore, the findings of this study are expected to be generalizable to the population under investigation.

Data were collected using research instruments in the form of psychological scales measuring emotional maturity, self-control, and aggressive behavior. The instruments were presented as closed-ended statements using a Likert scale format. The collected data were analyzed using inferential statistical techniques. Correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationships among variables, while mediation analysis was used to test the role of self-control as an intervening variable. Mediation testing was conducted through stepwise regression analysis or path analysis in accordance with the research objectives. All data analysis procedures were carried out with the assistance of statistical software.

### RESEARCH RESULT

Variable Relationship	Standardized Estimate ( $\beta$ )	SE	z-value	p-value	Interpretation
EM $\rightarrow$ AB	-0.203	0.060	-3.376	< 0.001	Significant
EM $\rightarrow$ SC	0.814	0.027	29.715	< 0.001	Significant
SC $\rightarrow$ AB	-0.649	0.052	-12.372	< 0.001	Significant
EM $\rightarrow$ SC $\rightarrow$ AB	-0.528	0.047	-11.207	< 0.001	Significant

The results of the statistical analysis indicate that all relationships among variables in the research model are significant. Emotional maturity (EM) was found to have a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior (AB), with a standardized estimate of  $\beta = -0.203$ ,  $SE = 0.060$ ,  $z = -3.376$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . This

finding indicates that higher levels of emotional maturity among Brimob members are associated with lower tendencies toward aggressive behavior. In addition, emotional maturity had a significant positive effect on self-control (SC), with  $\beta = 0.814$ ,  $SE = 0.027$ ,  $z = 29.715$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . These results suggest that emotional maturity is a strong predictor of self-control ability. Furthermore, self-control had a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior, with  $\beta = -0.649$ ,  $SE = 0.052$ ,  $z = -12.372$ , and  $p < 0.001$ , indicating that individuals with better self-control tend to exhibit lower levels of aggressive behavior.

Beyond direct effects, the analysis also revealed a significant indirect effect of emotional maturity on aggressive behavior through self-control. The mediation pathway  $EM \rightarrow SC \rightarrow AB$  yielded a standardized estimate of  $\beta = -0.528$ ,  $SE = 0.047$ ,  $z = -11.207$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . These findings confirm that self-control serves as a significant mediating variable in the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior. Thus, the influence of emotional maturity on aggressive behavior occurs not only directly but is also strengthened through enhanced self-control. All tested pathways in the research model support the proposed hypotheses. Overall, the results confirm the structural relationships among emotional maturity, self-control, and aggressive behavior among Brimob members.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that emotional maturity has a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior among Brimob members. This finding suggests that individuals who are able to understand, manage, and express emotions adaptively are less likely to display aggressive behavior. In the context of Brimob duties, which are characterized by high pressure and risk, emotional maturity functions as an internal regulatory mechanism that helps individuals respond to situations more rationally. Individuals with good emotional maturity are able to delay impulsive reactions and choose responses that are consistent with norms and procedures. This finding aligns with the view that aggression is influenced not only by external situations but also by individuals' internal psychological capacities. Recent studies have shown that emotional maturity serves as a protective factor against aggressive behavior in high-risk professions. Thus, these results strengthen the position of emotional maturity as an important variable in aggression control (Arslan, Yıldırım, & Tanhan, 2021; García-Sancho et al., 2020).

In addition to its direct effect on aggression, emotional maturity was also found to have a very strong positive effect on self-control. This result indicates that emotionally mature individuals tend to have better abilities to regulate impulses, emotions, and behavior. Emotional maturity enables individuals to recognize emotional signals at an early stage before they develop into impulses that are difficult to control. This process forms the basis for effective self-control, particularly in high-pressure situations. In the Brimob work environment, this ability is crucial for maintaining behavioral stability when facing conflict or threats. These findings support previous research suggesting that self-control

develops through mature emotional regulation abilities. Therefore, emotional maturity can be viewed as a primary psychological foundation for self-control (Tangney et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022).

The findings also demonstrate that self-control has a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior. This result confirms that individuals with high levels of self-control are better able to restrain aggressive impulses and consider the consequences of their actions. Self-control functions as an inhibitory mechanism against impulsive responses that may be harmful to oneself or others. In the context of Brimob, self-control plays an important role in ensuring that personnel actions remain within legal and professional ethical boundaries. Low self-control increases the risk of uncontrolled aggressive behavior, particularly in emotionally intense situations. Recent studies indicate that self-control is a consistent predictor of lower aggression across cultural contexts and professions. Thus, these findings reinforce the central role of self-control in regulating aggressive behavior (Denson et al., 2021; Duckworth et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the mediation analysis revealed that self-control significantly mediates the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior. This finding indicates that the influence of emotional maturity on aggression operates not only directly but also indirectly through enhanced self-control. In other words, emotionally mature individuals tend to develop better self-control, which in turn suppresses aggressive tendencies. This mechanism explains how emotional capacity is translated into more adaptive behavior. In the context of Brimob duties, self-control serves as a crucial bridge between emotional regulation and field behavior. These results support theoretical models of self-regulation that position self-control as a primary mediator in the regulation of problematic behavior. Thus, self-control occupies a strategic position in the relationship between emotional maturity and aggression (Gross, 2021; Hofmann et al., 2022).

These mediation findings also suggest that efforts to reduce aggressive behavior will be more effective when focused on strengthening self-control through the enhancement of emotional maturity. This approach emphasizes the importance of preventive interventions and the development of individuals' internal capacities. Training programs that focus solely on rule compliance without addressing internal psychological aspects may be less optimal. Recent research has shown that emotion regulation-based programs can significantly increase self-control and reduce aggression. In the context of law enforcement, this approach is particularly relevant for maintaining professionalism and public trust.

These findings strengthen the argument that developing internal psychological resources constitutes an effective long-term strategy. Accordingly, the results of this study have strong practical implications for human resource management within Brimob (Krämer et al., 2020; Velotti et al., 2021).

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the literature on aggressive behavior by affirming the simultaneous roles of emotional maturity and self-control within a single structural model. This research provides empirical evidence that aggression can be understood as the result of an interaction between emotional capacity and self-regulatory mechanisms. The findings support self-regulation approaches in psychology that emphasize the importance of internal processes in shaping behavior. Moreover, this study extends the application of emotion regulation and self-control theories to the policing profession, particularly within Brimob. Research on aggression among law enforcement personnel remains relatively limited; therefore, these findings make a valuable contribution. Thus, this study is not only practically relevant but also theoretically significant. The results are consistent with contemporary psychological research emphasizing the integration of emotion and behavioral control (Baumeister & Vohs, 2021; Naragon-Gainey et al., 2022).

Finally, the findings of this study underscore that aggressive behavior among Brimob members is not an isolated phenomenon but is influenced by individuals' internal psychological dynamics. Emotional maturity and self-control were shown to play key roles in suppressing aggression, both directly and indirectly. Therefore, aggression management approaches should be directed toward strengthening personnel's psychological capacities. These results provide an empirical basis for the formulation of more comprehensive policies and psychological development programs. Interventions based on emotion regulation and self-control are expected to improve behavioral quality and professionalism among Brimob members. Consequently, this study makes a strategic contribution to the development of applied psychological practices in law enforcement settings and highlights the importance of investing in psychological aspects as part of operational readiness (Taylor & Hamilton, 2023; Worthington et al., 2022).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that emotional maturity plays an important role in reducing aggressive behavior among Brimob members. Emotional maturity was found to have a significant negative effect on aggressive behavior, indicating that individuals with good emotional management abilities are better able to control aggressive responses in high-pressure situations. In addition, emotional maturity has a significant positive effect on self-control, suggesting that emotionally mature individuals possess a greater capacity to regulate impulses and behavior. Self-control, in turn, was shown to have a negative effect on aggressive behavior, confirming its role as an inhibitory mechanism against impulsive and aggressive actions.

Furthermore, the mediation analysis demonstrated that self-control significantly mediates the relationship between emotional maturity and aggressive behavior, indicating that the effect of emotional maturity on aggression largely operates through enhanced self-control. These findings confirm that aggressive behavior among Brimob members is influenced not only

by situational factors but also by individuals' internal psychological dynamics. Accordingly, this study emphasizes the importance of developing emotional maturity and self-control as primary strategies for reducing aggressive behavior and enhancing the professionalism of Brimob members.

#### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Each study has limitations; thus, you can describe it here and briefly provide suggestions for further research.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This section gives you the opportunity to thank your colleagues who provided suggestions for your paper. You can also express your appreciation for the financial assistance you received, in completing this research.

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