



Emotional Regulation among High School Students Affected by Parental Divorce: A Qualitative Case Study

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: July 31, 2025; **Revised:** May 23, 2026; **Accepted:** May 27, 2026

KEYWORDS

Emotional regulation;
Students experiencing divorce;
Group guidance;
Case studies;

ABSTRACT

Parental divorce impacts children's emotional well-being, especially during adolescence. Students who experience divorce are prone to experiencing difficulties in managing emotions, which can affect social and academic behaviour. This study aims to describe emotional regulation among students who experienced divorce at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya during the 2024/2025 academic year. The method used was a qualitative case study design. The primary data source was students who had experienced divorce, with supporting data from the guidance counsellor and homeroom teacher. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that students have basic emotional regulation skills, but they are not yet optimal, especially in accepting negative emotional responses. Gender differences were also found, with male students accepting the divorce more quickly, while female students tend to suppress their emotions. The conclusion suggests that personal experiences and social support influence students' emotional regulation. The implications of these findings emphasise the importance of group guidance services to build emotional resilience and self-acceptance.

KATA KUNCI

Regulasi emosi;
Siswa korban perceraian;
Bimbingan kelompok;
Studi kasus;

ABSTRAK

Perceraian orang tua berdampak pada kondisi emosional anak, terutama saat remaja. Siswa korban perceraian rentan mengalami kesulitan dalam mengelola emosi, yang dapat memengaruhi perilaku sosial dan akademik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan regulasi emosi pada siswa korban perceraian di SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya tahun ajaran 2024/2025. Metode yang digunakan yaitu pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Sumber data utama siswa korban perceraian, dengan sumber data pendukung guru BK dan wali kelas. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa memiliki kemampuan dasar dalam regulasi emosi, namun belum optimal, terutama dalam aspek menerima respon emosi negatif. Perbedaan gender juga ditemukan, di mana siswa laki-laki lebih cepat menerima kondisi perceraian, sementara siswa perempuan cenderung memendam emosi. Kesimpulan menunjukkan bahwa regulasi emosi siswa dipengaruhi oleh pengalaman pribadi dan dukungan sosial. Implikasi temuan ini menekankan pentingnya layanan bimbingan kelompok untuk membangun ketahanan emosional dan penerimaan diri.

1. INTRODUCTION

Divorce has become an increasingly prevalent social phenomenon that generates various psychosocial consequences, particularly for children and adolescents involved in the process. In Indonesia, divorce is often perceived as the final solution to prolonged marital conflict caused by factors such as incompatibility between spouses, ne-

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22460/quanta.v10i2.6393>



glect of family responsibilities, economic hardship, and early-age marriage (Mz et al., 2025). Data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023 recorded 463,654 divorce cases nationwide, with West Java identified as the province with the highest divorce rate (Andalusia & Yasniwati, 2024; Hendajany & Suaesih, 2020; Izzah et al., 2022; Reftantia et al., 2024). In Tasikmalaya City alone, 1,681 divorce cases were reported that year. These figures indicate that divorce is not solely a private family matter but also a broader social issue that may significantly affect the psychological, emotional, and social development of children and adolescents.

Adolescents from divorced families frequently experience complex emotional and psychosocial pressures (Murniasih & Irvan, 2023). They are required to adapt to substantial changes in family structure, reduced parental involvement, diminished emotional support, and continuing social and academic demands. Such conditions may influence adolescents' emotional stability, self-adjustment, and social relationships within the school environment (Ifdil et al., 2020). Moreover, parental divorce may disrupt adolescents' sense of emotional security, resulting in emotional reactions such as anger, sadness, disappointment, anxiety, and withdrawal from social interactions. Consequently, emotional regulation becomes a crucial ability that enables students to cope effectively with the psychological pressures arising from parental divorce.

Gross (2014) defines emotional regulation as the process through which individuals manage, inhibit, and modify emotional responses in accordance with environmental demands and personal goals. Emotional regulation plays an essential role in maintaining psychological well-being, fostering healthy interpersonal relationships, and supporting students' academic achievement. According to Hasmarlin and Hirmaningsih (2019, p. 150), emotional regulation encompasses several important dimensions, including emotional regulation strategies, the ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions, the ability to control emotional responses, and the ability to accept emotional experiences. Emotional regulation strategies are associated with individuals' beliefs in their capacity to solve problems and calm themselves when facing emotional distress (Firdaus, 2020; Martini, 2023). The ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions refers to an individual's capacity to stay focused and behave adaptively despite stressful circumstances ('ulya & Gumiandari, 2024). Furthermore, emotional control involves appropriately managing emotional expression, both verbally and nonverbally. In contrast, emotional acceptance involves acknowledging negative emotional experiences without shame or self-rejection (Zuhara, 2025; Iloakasia et al., 2025)

The phenomenon of emotional regulation difficulties among adolescents affected by parental divorce was also identified at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya. Preliminary observations and interviews with guidance and counselling teachers and homeroom teachers revealed that several students exhibited behaviours such as truancy, tardiness, aggression, and social withdrawal. Some of these students were known to come from divorced or dysfunctional families. Initial information from the school suggested that family conditions were among the factors influencing students' emotional adjustment and behaviour in the school setting. Although these preliminary findings require further investigation, they highlight the importance of understanding students' emotional regulation abilities in responding to the consequences of parental divorce.

Within the context of guidance and counselling, understanding the emotional regulation of students affected by parental divorce is essential for developing counselling services that are responsive to students' psychological needs. Guidance and counselling teachers play a significant role in helping students develop emotional management skills, foster adaptive self-adjustment, and reduce the psychological impact of family conflict.

Previous studies have extensively explored emotional regulation among adolescents from divorced families. Natalia et al. (2025) and Oktaviana and Rizkia (2025) found that parental divorce may negatively affect adolescents' emotional stability and increase their vulnerability to stress and anxiety. Other studies demonstrated that social support and positive parenting patterns play important roles in helping adolescents develop adaptive emotional regulation following parental divorce (Maulana et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025). Furthermore, strong emotional regulation abilities may help adolescents adapt socially and reduce the negative psychological effects of family conflict (Annisa & Nur, 2025; Qowimah et al., 2026). Kintan (2025) also examined differences in emotional regulation based on age and gender among adolescents affected by parental divorce.

Despite the growing body of research on emotional regulation among adolescents from divorced families, most previous studies have employed quantitative approaches that primarily focus on measuring levels of emotional regulation and generalising findings. In reality, the emotional experiences of adolescents affected by parental divorce are complex, subjective, and strongly influenced by social contexts and individual life experiences. Studies that explore students' subjective emotional experiences within the school context, particularly regarding how they interpret, experience, and manage emotions after parental divorce, remain relatively limited. In addition, qualitative studies examining gender differences in emotional regulation in the field of guidance and counselling remain scarce.

In this context, a qualitative case study approach is particularly relevant, as it enables researchers to explore students' emotional experiences in greater depth and with greater context. Through this approach, the study focuses not only on emotional regulation but also on the psychological processes students experience as they navigate family dynamics and school life after parental divorce.

This study, therefore, explores the emotional regulation experiences of students affected by parental divorce within the context of social and academic interactions at school, using a qualitative case study approach. The study also examines gender differences in emotional regulation while considering the local social and cultural dynamics of students at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya, aspects that have rarely been explored in previous research.

This study aims to describe the emotional regulation of students affected by parental divorce at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya and to identify gender differences in emotional regulation. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of guidance and counselling studies, particularly in the areas of emotional regulation and the psychosocial dynamics of adolescents affected by parental divorce. In practice, the findings are expected to provide a foundation for developing individual and group counselling services that are more responsive to students' emotional needs. In addition, this study is expected to provide insights for teachers, parents, and policymakers to understand better and support students affected by parental divorce in more empathetic, adaptive, and constructive ways.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore and understand in depth the emotional regulation experiences of students affected by parental divorce within their natural social and educational contexts. The case study design enabled the researcher to investigate the participants' emotional experiences comprehensively and contextually, particularly regarding how they interpreted, managed, and responded to emotional pressures resulting from parental divorce.

The use of a case study design also allowed the researcher to examine emotional regulation as a dynamic psychological process influenced by personal experiences, family background, social interactions, and school environments. Through this approach, the study not only focused on identifying emotional regulation behaviours but also explored the meanings, coping processes, and emotional adjustment strategies students developed in their daily lives. Therefore, the qualitative case study approach provided a deeper understanding of the psychosocial dynamics experienced by students affected by parental divorce.

2.2 Subject.

This study was conducted at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The research site was selected purposively because the school has a relatively high number of students from divorced families, which is relevant to the study's focus.

The participants in this study consisted of three students at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya who were affected by parental divorce, along with guidance and counselling teachers and homeroom teachers as supporting informants. The participants were selected using purposive sampling with the criterion that the students' parents had been legally divorced. The participants consisted of one student with a history of delinquent behaviour and two high-achieving students to obtain a broader understanding of emotional regulation across different behavioural backgrounds. Participant validity was confirmed through school records and preliminary interview results.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The primary instrument in this study was the researcher, supported by interview guidelines and observation sheets developed based on Gross's theory of emotional regulation indicators. Interviews were conducted directly with each participant and supporting informant, recorded using audio devices, and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Documentation in the form of field notes, school data, and researcher reflections was also used to strengthen the research findings.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, comprising three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved organising and categorising interview results according to emerging themes. The data were then presented in a descriptive narrative and interpreted through the triangulation of interview, observation, and documentation findings to ensure data validity.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

a) Strategies for Emotional Regulation

The findings revealed that students affected by parental divorce demonstrated diverse emotional regulation strategies in managing negative emotions such as anger, sadness, and disappointment. These strategies included passive, reflective, and active approaches, which were also influenced by social support from their surrounding environment. The first female participant (N1P) appeared to rely more on passive strategies such as remaining silent and crying, as reflected in her statement: "I cried in my room for about an hour." N1P also occasionally shared her feelings with her mother, stating, "I told my mother that my father's words hurt my feelings, but my mother told me to be patient and sincere because that is just the way he is." In addition, the guidance and counselling teacher confirmed that N1P was known as a quiet student who rarely openly expressed negative emotions.

The second female participant (N2P) tended to use reflective strategies by isolating herself and engaging in self-evaluation, as she explained: "I prefer to be alone first, stay quiet in my room, and reflect on what I have done, what is lacking, and what I have not achieved. I evaluate myself." N2P also mentioned that she was motivated by her older sibling, saying, "I want to be like my sibling and even better." Her homeroom teacher also stated that N2P often shared her feelings with close friends as a way to calm herself. Meanwhile, the third participant, a male student (N3L), used active strategies through distraction and social support. He diverted his feelings by playing games and spending time with friends who had similar family backgrounds, stating, "Usually, I distract myself by playing games or hanging out with friends."

Overall, the participants' emotional regulation strategies included crying, isolating themselves, sharing stories with close individuals, and diverting attention to other activities. Support from parents and peers also played an important role in helping them adapt emotionally.

b) Engaging in Goal-Directed Behaviour

The findings showed that all participants demonstrated different ways of maintaining their daily functioning despite experiencing emotional pressure due to parental divorce. The first female participant (N1P) tended to use passive coping strategies such as crying and isolating herself, but she did not exhibit self-harming behaviour. She stated, "I just cry... but I never hurt myself." This was reinforced by the guidance and counselling teacher, who explained, "N1P is a closed-off student, but her attendance is good."

The second female participant (N2P) demonstrated more adaptive coping strategies through cognitive reappraisal, sharing stories with her mother, and seeking positive distractions. She stated, "I talk to my mother... and look for my own happiness, like spending time with friends." Her homeroom teacher also mentioned that N2P continued to achieve academically and "often showed enthusiasm for learning." In contrast, the third male participant (N3L) appeared to gain strength from his social environment, despite having previously experienced potentially harmful emotional outbursts. He admitted, "I once brought an iron bar because I wanted to fight my father." However, he also stated, "I shared my feelings with my friends, and they told me they had also been in the same situation." His homeroom teacher explained that his school attendance was significantly affected, stating, "His attendance is very poor."

In general, students affected by parental divorce demonstrated the ability to continue fulfilling their roles as students despite emotional pressure. They were able to manage negative emotions so they did not significantly interfere with their academic and social activities. The strategies they used included distraction techniques and social support from mothers and peers with similar backgrounds.

c) Control Emotional Responses

The findings also showed that students affected by parental divorce demonstrated emotional control through various adaptive strategies. The first female participant (N1P) managed her emotions through journaling, an emotional outlet. She explained, *"Usually I write in my notebook for about ten minutes... after that I feel calmer."* The guidance and counselling teacher added, *"N1P is open to feedback, but sometimes she looks weak and loses focus when she is tired."* This indicates that physical conditions also influenced N1P's emotional stability.

The second female participant (N2P) tended to manage her emotions through distraction, such as listening to music and podcasts. She stated, *"I like listening to music until I fall asleep."* In addition, N2P experienced physical symptoms such as trembling and shortness of breath when emotionally triggered, but she attempted to calm herself by drinking water or washing her face. She explained, *"I often tremble when something triggers me, and I cannot control it because it happens suddenly. Sometimes I even feel short of breath. Usually, I drink water or wash my face to calm myself down so it does not continue."* This reflects her self-awareness in creating emotional pauses. Her homeroom teacher also stated, *"When N2P is tired or sad, she suddenly becomes very quiet... maybe that is her me-time."*

Meanwhile, the third male participant (N3L) relied on relaxation techniques such as deep breathing to calm himself. He stated, *"I often calm myself by taking deep breaths and exhaling, especially when I feel sad and alone."* His homeroom teacher also believed that N3L needed appropriate emotional outlets, stating, *"I suggested that he join extracurricular activities such as futsal so that his emotions can be channelled positively."*

Overall, the students demonstrated emotional control through reflective strategies such as writing and deep breathing, as well as distraction strategies such as listening to music and spending time alone. Social support and environmental factors also became important elements in maintaining their emotional stability.

d) Acceptance of Emotional Responses

The findings regarding the ability to accept emotional responses refer to the extent to which individuals acknowledge and confront negative emotions without rejecting or concealing them. In this study, variations in levels of emotional acceptance were found among the three participants. The first female participant (N1P) demonstrated difficulties in fully accepting her emotions. She stated, *"I cannot accept it; why does the same problem keep happening?"* and *"I feel ashamed, so I tend to hide my feelings."* In addition, information from the guidance and counselling teacher reinforced that N1P tended to be emotionally closed off, stating that *"N1P has difficulty opening up and tends to be quiet."*

The second female participant (N2P) also showed difficulties in the process of emotional acceptance. She stated, *"I feel embarrassed, so I usually leave."* However, this contrasted with her homeroom teacher's observations, who described N2P as an open and positive individual, stating that *"N2P is more open, likes to share stories, and often asks for advice."* Meanwhile, the third male participant (N3L) appeared to accept his emotions more readily. He explained, *"I just stay quiet and go through it because eventually it will pass,"* and *"It is not something embarrassing."* Nevertheless, his homeroom teacher observed that N3L still tended to hide his emotions, stating that *"N3L often pretends to be fine in front of others, maybe because he feels embarrassed."* This indicates that although N3L was able to accept his emotions, he selectively chose situations and environments in which to express them.

The students' ability to accept emotional responses was influenced by self-confidence, emotional awareness, and support from friends, family members, and teachers. Students who felt supported appeared to be more capable of expressing and accepting their emotions in healthier ways.

e) Emotional Regulation Findings Based on Gender

1) Strategies for Emotional Regulation

The interview findings indicated no significant differences in emotional regulation strategies by gender. All participants demonstrated varied strategies in regulating their emotions. The female participants (N1P and N2P) tended to use strategies such as withdrawal, crying, self-isolation, self-evaluation, and problem-solving. Meanwhile, the male participant preferred to divert his attention by playing games or socialising with friends.

The first female participant (N1P) stated, *"I just stay quiet and do nothing... I just cry in my room,"* and *"I feel calmer afterwards,"* indicating that crying helped her achieve emotional relief. The second female participant (N2P) also demonstrated reflective emotional regulation strategies by stating, *"I prefer to be alone first... I evaluate myself."* In contrast, the third participant, a male student (N3L), chose distraction strategies, saying, *"I distract myself by playing games or hanging out with friends."*

Therefore, the findings regarding gender differences in emotional regulation strategies did not reveal significant differences. Instead, the results reflected a diversity of adaptive strategies influenced by personality, parenting patterns, social support, and the personal experiences of students affected by parental divorce.

2) Engaging in Goal-Directed Behaviour

The findings regarding the ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions showed how each participant managed emotional distress without engaging in destructive behaviour. The first female participant (N1P) chose crying and isolating herself as emotional outlets, stating, "Usually I just cry for a long time and lock myself in my room." This reflects a more closed emotional regulation strategy.

Meanwhile, the second female participant (N2P) demonstrated high emotional awareness by rejecting social pressure to forgive before emotional recovery. She stated, "*Imagine having 13 years erased just by saying 'sorry'; that is impossible for me.*" In addition, the third male participant (N3L) had previously experienced emotional outbursts but was able to control them. He admitted, "*I once brought an iron bar to fight my father,*" but later realised that violence was not the solution, stating, "*Even if I hit my father, it would not solve the problem.*"

Thus, these findings indicate that although participants differed in their approaches to negative emotions, both female and male participants demonstrated a basic ability to restrain themselves and think rationally in emotional situations. This ability can be further developed through strengthening appropriate emotional regulation strategies.

3) Control Emotional Responses

The findings showed that participants demonstrated diverse yet adaptive approaches to emotion regulation. The first female participant (N1P) expressed her emotions through crying and writing in a diary, stating, "*I write in my diary for about ten minutes... after that I feel calmer.*" Meanwhile, the second female participant (N2P) tended to avoid emotional triggers and seek support from her mother, saying, "*I usually talk to my mother or discuss things with her... asking whether what I did was wrong.*"

In contrast, the third male participant (N3L) managed his emotions through breathing techniques, explaining, "*I try to calm myself by regulating my breathing.*" Overall, the female participants relied more on open emotional expression and social support as forms of emotional control. In contrast, the male participant tended to use self-regulation and constructive coping strategies while expressing emotions only in contexts he considered safe.

These findings did not indicate significant gender differences in emotional control. Instead, they reflected variations in emotional regulation patterns, in which each participant used adaptive and functional strategies to help manage negative emotions arising from their experiences as children of divorced parents.

4) Acceptance of Emotional Responses

The findings regarding the acceptance of emotional responses referred to the extent to which individuals were able to acknowledge and confront negative emotions without rejection. In this study, notable differences were found between the female and male participants. The female participants (N1P and N2P) tended to feel ashamed and reluctant to express their emotions openly. N1P stated, "*I cannot accept it; why does the same problem keep happening?*" and "*I feel ashamed, so I tend to hide my feelings.*" Similarly, N2P expressed, "*I feel embarrassed, so I usually leave and prefer to be alone first.*" These responses indicate tendencies toward avoidance and emotional suppression due to fear of social judgment.

In contrast, the male participant (N3L) appeared more open and accepting of his emotions. He stated, "*I just stay quiet and go through it because eventually it will pass,*" and "*I do not feel ashamed in front of my friends.*" He also emphasised the importance of social support in his acceptance process, stating, "*I was able to reach a point of acceptance because of the support and encouragement from my friends.*"

Therefore, the findings suggest a tendency for differences in the acceptance of emotional responses between male and female participants. Female participants tended to experience feelings of shame and reluctance to acknowledge and express negative emotions, leading them to hide their feelings, distance themselves from social environments, and suppress emotions due to concerns about others' judgments. In contrast, the male participant demonstrated a more open level of emotional acceptance. He did not perceive negative emotions as something shameful and was able to express them more calmly through solitude, emotional reflection, and support from close friends.

3.2. Discussion

This study demonstrates that students' emotional regulation following parental divorce can be understood through four main aspects: emotional regulation strategies, the ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions, the ability to control emotions, and the ability to accept negative emotional responses. These findings were analysed using Gross's (2014) emotional regulation framework, which emphasises that emotional regulation is a dynamic process of managing the emergence, intensity, and expression of emotions so that individuals can continue functioning adaptively in everyday life. In the context of students affected by parental divorce, emotional regulation becomes important because changes in family structure may create psychological pressures that influence students' emotional conditions, social relationships, and academic activities within the school environment.

In the aspect of emotional regulation strategies, students demonstrated various approaches in dealing with emotional pressure resulting from parental divorce. These strategies included passive responses, such as crying and remaining silent; reflective strategies, such as self-reflection and journaling; and adaptive strategies, such as distraction and seeking social support. These findings are consistent with Emotion Regulation Theory, which distinguishes between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies (Kököneyi et al., 2023; Rueth & Lohaus, 2022). In this study, silence and crying may be understood as forms of temporary expressive suppression, while journaling, distraction, and seeking social support indicate attempts at cognitive reappraisal to reinterpret emotional experiences (Azizah & Hendriani, 2023). These strategies suggest that students were not merely suppressing emotions but also seeking safe ways to reduce psychological pressure without creating additional conflict within social or family environments. The use of journaling and distracting activities may also be interpreted as forms of internal coping that developed because students did not always feel they had sufficient space to express emotions openly.

These findings align with Wardah (2020), who found that individuals tend to respond to emotional pressure through behaviours such as silence, crying, complaining, and anger. In addition, Diti and Cahaya (2016) found that adolescents' emotional regulation strategies may include distracting activities, such as playing games, as well as religious and academic approaches, such as engaging in prayer and focusing on educational goals. In the context of students affected by parental divorce, distraction strategies and reflective approaches indicate efforts to maintain psychological stability in order to continue carrying out daily school activities.

Regarding the ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions, all participants continued to perform academic activities despite emotional pressure from parental divorce. Theoretically, this condition reflects adaptive emotional regulation, as described by Setyawan (2023), namely the ability of individuals to maintain goal-directed behaviour while experiencing negative emotions. These findings indicate the presence of emotion regulation resilience, the ability to maintain academic functioning amid psychological pressure (Angela & Murti, 2026; Mirabelle, 2026). Nevertheless, this ability does not necessarily indicate that students were entirely free from emotional distress. Several students continued to experience sadness, anger, and disappointment, yet they attempted to maintain their student roles to remain socially accepted within the school environment.

This condition suggests that schools serve as important social spaces for students affected by parental divorce, helping them maintain emotional stability amid family conflict. Academic activities and social interactions at school served as both positive distractions and means of self-adjustment. These findings are also consistent with Simon and Nath, as cited in Hasmarlin and Hirmaningsih (2019), who explained that there are differences in emotional expression based on gender, where females tend to express emotions to maintain interpersonal relationships, while males tend to express emotions such as anger or pride as forms of self-affirmation.

In terms of emotional control, students employed various strategies such as journaling, distraction, listening to music, and breathing techniques to reduce the intensity of negative emotions. According to Herron et al. (2023) and Smyre et al. (2023), these strategies are categorised as response modulation, namely efforts to influence emotional responses after emotions emerge through the regulation of expression, attention, and physiological responses. The use of breathing techniques reflects attempts to regulate physiology and reduce emotional tension. At the same time, distraction and listening to music indicate cognitive regulation intended to divert attention from emotionally distressing stimuli. These strategies demonstrate that students attempted to avoid impulsive reactions and sought ways to achieve more stable emotional conditions.

These findings are supported by Wulandari and Khusumadewi A (2021), who found that individuals experiencing emotional distress tend to use silence, reflection, and breathing techniques to calm themselves before returning to more controlled emotional conditions. In the context of this study, the ability to control emotions indicates that students affected by parental divorce were not entirely in maladaptive emotional states. Some students

had already developed the ability to recognise emerging emotions and select strategies to prevent excessive emotional outbursts in the school social environment.

Regarding the ability to accept emotional responses, this study found gender-based differences. Female students tended to suppress and hide emotions due to shame and concerns about social judgment, whereas male students showed greater emotional openness. Theoretically, this condition may be explained by the concept of expressive suppression, namely, individuals' attempts to inhibit emotional expression after emotions emerge as a form of self-protection in social interactions (Caramanica et al., 2022; Daymude et al., 2025; Jones et al., 2024). This strategy is commonly used to maintain self-image and avoid negative evaluations from the social environment (Nuraini et al., 2023; Wijaya & Kurniadi, 2022).

The tendency of female students to hide emotions indicates that social norms and environmental expectations influence how individuals express negative emotions. Females often feel the need to maintain an emotional image to avoid being perceived as weak within their social environment (Hoskin et al., 2023; Kolić et al., 2024). In contrast, male students tended to be more open in displaying certain emotions, particularly anger, because such expressions are more socially accepted. These findings indicate that emotional regulation among students affected by parental divorce is influenced not only by individual psychological conditions but also by social constructions regarding emotional expression based on gender.

Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that emotional regulation among students affected by parental divorce is a complex and dynamic process. Strategies such as seeking social support, journaling, and breathing techniques tended to be adaptive because they helped students manage emotional pressure in more constructive ways. In contrast, tendencies to suppress emotions and withdraw excessively may become maladaptive strategies if practised continuously without adequate social support and guidance. The variation in strategies used indicates that experiences of parental divorce influence not only students' emotional conditions, but also shape different coping patterns based on gender and social experiences. Therefore, emotional regulation among students affected by parental divorce should not be understood as a singular phenomenon, but rather as a dynamic process shaped by the interaction of cognitive, emotional, and social factors within the context of school life.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study contribute to the development of emotional regulation theory by demonstrating that students affected by parental divorce can employ adaptive emotional regulation strategies in response to the emotional contexts they encounter. These findings enrich previous studies by providing new perspectives on the dynamics of emotional regulation among adolescents from non-intact family backgrounds. The study also highlights that individual psychological factors do not solely influence emotional regulation but are closely related to social support, gender roles, and adolescents' interactions within school environments.

Practically, the findings provide an important foundation for the development of structured and needs-based counselling services for students affected by parental divorce. Such services help students express emotions in healthier ways and develop more adaptive emotional regulation skills. Guidance and counselling teachers are expected to provide responsive interventions through individual and group counselling, emotional support programs, and the development of emotional coping skills tailored to students' psychosocial conditions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the emotional regulation of students affected by parental divorce at SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya demonstrates complex dynamics influenced by personal experiences, family conditions, and the social support available to students. Students' emotional regulation was reflected through four main aspects: emotional regulation strategies, the ability to remain unaffected by negative emotions, the ability to control emotions, and the ability to accept negative emotional responses. Most students demonstrated basic abilities to manage emotions through strategies such as self-isolation, journaling, listening to music, distraction activities, and continuing to fulfil academic responsibilities despite emotional pressure from parental divorce. However, some students still had difficulty openly accepting and expressing negative emotions, particularly sadness, disappointment, and anger. These findings indicate that students' emotional regulation strategies combine adaptive and maladaptive strategies in responding to psychological pressure arising from changes in family structure.

This study also found differences in emotional regulation characteristics based on gender. Male students tended to accept their parents' divorce more quickly. They were generally more open in expressing certain emotions. In contrast, female students demonstrated better social-emotional control. However, they required a longer

process of emotional acceptance due to tendencies to suppress emotions and to consider social judgments from their surrounding environment. These findings indicate that the emotional regulation of students affected by parental divorce is influenced not only by individual psychological conditions but also by social factors and gender constructions within their social environments.

The findings of this study highlight the importance of guidance and counselling services in helping students affected by parental divorce develop more adaptive emotional regulation strategies. Therefore, guidance and counselling teachers need to provide services that are responsive to students' emotional needs, including individual and group counselling as well as other supportive services that strengthen coping skills, self-acceptance, and emotional management. This study remains limited by the small number of participants and the research scope, which was confined to a single school. Therefore, future studies are expected to involve broader participant groups and explore other factors influencing the emotional regulation of adolescents affected by parental divorce in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents' emotional dynamics within divorced family contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express their gratitude to SMAN 10 Tasikmalaya for granting permission and providing support for this study. Appreciation is also extended to all participants and informants who willingly devoted their time and provided valuable information to complete this research. The authors also sincerely thank the academic supervisor for the guidance and direction provided throughout the research process.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The authors contributed to the conceptualization of the study, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation. All authors revised and approved the final version of the manuscript and take full responsibility for the content of this article.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this study.

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