

The effect of body shaming on self-confidence

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ABSTRACT

Body shaming remains a prevalent issue among adolescents and has been shown to impact their psychological well-being, making it an urgent concern within the educational context. This study aims to analyse the effect of body shaming on self-confidence and to describe the implications for guidance and counseling among high school students in Depok. The research employed a quantitative approach with a sample of 150 tenth-grade students. The normality test showed that the body shaming variable had a significance value of 0.051 (> 0.05) and the self-confidence variable had a value of 0.080 (> 0.05), indicating that both variables were normally distributed. The linearity test produced a significance value of 0.525 (> 0.05), confirming a linear relationship between the variables. Furthermore, the simple linear regression test yielded a significance value of 0.002 (< 0.05), demonstrating that body shaming has a significant effect on self-confidence. These findings indicate that higher levels of body shaming are associated with lower levels of self-confidence in students, highlighting the need for effective school counseling interventions to address and mitigate its impact.

Keywords:

Body shaming
Self-Confidence
Adolescence

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Introduction

Self-confidence levels in Indonesia, particularly among teenagers, are an issue that deserves serious attention. Adolescence is a period full of challenges, such as academic pressure, social demands, and emotional changes, which often make them vulnerable to various psychological problems. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) of the Republic of Indonesia, 56% of Indonesian children, predominantly girls, experience a crisis of self-confidence (Liputan6). Some survey results indicate that self-confidence levels among teenagers are in the moderate category, with only a small percentage of teenagers exhibiting high self-confidence (Tohir, 2005). There is also a survey result from Farida et al. (2014) showing that 25% of adolescents' self-confidence is in the moderate category, while 75% is in the low category.

As social beings, humans have a natural instinct to interact with others, and this becomes increasingly important as we enter adolescence. At this stage of life, social interaction is not merely a secondary need but an integral part of personal development. For students, the ability to socialize with their surroundings is an essential need that must be fulfilled. If this social need is disrupted, it can lead to various emotional problems such as dissatisfaction, which can eventually turn into anxiety, fear, and excessive emotional reactions. One of the key factors influencing the success of a person's social interaction is self-confidence, which plays an important role in creating healthy and positive social relationships with others and the environment (Tanjung & Amelia, 2017).

According to Iswikharmanjaya and Agung (2014), self-confidence is a personality trait defined as a person's belief and ability to have a positive attitude toward their capabilities, as they are not easily influenced by

others. Haryati et al. (2021) state that self-confidence is a person's behavior of accepting themselves as they are, both in terms of positive and negative aspects, which acquired through a learning process for personal happiness. Wahyuni (2013) also stated that self-confidence is not a trait or talent that is innate, but is acquired through mental quality, education and empowerment.

Self-confidence can be understood as the result of various internal and external processes that allow a person to feel confident in their abilities and qualities. Self-confidence is not innate, but something that is developed through experience, learning, and social interaction. A person who has self-confidence is able to accept themselves with all their strengths and weaknesses, so that they are not easily influenced by the views of others. In the context of self-confidence, there are aspects that can influence it. Rini (2010) explains that these aspects include: 1) Belief in one's abilities, namely positive individual behavior related to belief in their abilities; 2) Optimism, which is a positive attitude of individuals who tend to think positively about their abilities in doing certain things; 3) Objectivity, which refers to an individual's view of a problem based on objective truth; 4) Responsibility, which involves the individual's readiness to be responsible for all risks that are their responsibility; 5) Rationality and realism, where individuals have thoughts that are acceptable and in accordance with reality related to a problem or event

One of the factors that causes students to feel a lack of self-confidence is body shaming. Early adolescence with a range of 10-14 years and late adolescence with a range of 15-20 years. Many changes occur during adolescence. Therefore, adolescence is described as a vulnerable period (Reyna et al., 2011). These changes include very rapid changes in adolescent thinking, sexual development, and physical changes, as well as increased social relationships, where adolescents begin to integrate into the wider community. However, in today's digital era, negative assessments of physical appearance are increasingly common, especially among adolescents. The act of demeaning someone is not only a social problem, but can also have a negative impact on students' mental health. When they are the target of bullying or belittling comments, this can cause a significant decrease in their self-confidence. This damage to self-esteem not only has an impact on daily life but also has an impact on academic success and social interactions. Body shaming that is rampant through social media can be categorized as a form of relational aggression, because it is done to lower a person's self-esteem or social status in public spaces. Research by Syahputra et al. (2024) shows that relational aggression often occurs in digital interactions, including through behaviors such as spreading derogatory comments or socially isolating individuals. This reinforces that social media is a means that increases the opportunity for body shaming, especially among adolescents. The level of body shaming based on gender, survey results from (Irmayanti et al., 2019) namely the aspect of criticizing other people's appearance without their knowledge, has a high percentage in male students (64%), and female students (58%). Body shaming also affects eating habits. The results of this study also confirm the relationship between body shame and eating disorders (Chairan, 2018). Because in the victim's mind, if we eat too much, our weight will definitely increase and eventually be teased by our friends. Therefore, someone who experiences body shaming is definitely suffering from an eating disorder.

A survey by Santoso (2018) reported that in 2018, the police handled 966 cases of physical abuse or body shaming in Indonesia. Through law enforcement and mediation between victims and perpetrators, 347 cases were successfully resolved. One of the places where body shaming frequently occurs is at school. The Body Peace Resolution survey conducted by Yahoo! shows that women experience body shaming more than men. The survey was conducted on 2,000 people aged 13-64 and found that 94% of teenage girls and 64% of teenage boys had experienced body shaming. Meanwhile, the results of a survey by Lestari, Marianti, & Rachmayani (2019) on teenagers in Malang City revealed a prevalence of body shaming at 79%, including 47% related to the face, 27% to body posture, 16% to the nose, 15% to the skin, and 12% to body weight. This indicates that body shaming is quite prevalent among teenagers. Body shaming among adolescents poses risks to mental health, such as engaging in unhealthy dieting behaviors, leading to low self-esteem, increasing the risk of eating disorders, body dysmorphia, and other issues.

Body shaming itself involves someone evaluating another person's body, physical appearance, skin color, or clothing through criticism, expressing opinions, or comparing them to others because they are deemed unideal or inconsistent with societal norms. In addition to judging others, body shaming is also a comment that reflects low self-esteem or ingratitude. Body shaming can have negative consequences. As stated by Haryati et al. (2021), the effects on someone who experiences body shaming may include: a) eating disorders; b) physical health issues; and c) depression. Body shaming by mocking someone's physical appearance has become commonplace and accepted in society. However, such behavior is not good and has negative effects on the victim of body shaming, as it often affects their mental and emotional state, leading them to feel insecure, have low self-esteem, and view themselves negatively. Ultimately, the body shaming experienced by an individual causes them to lose their self-confidence.

According to Gilbert (2002), there are several aspects to body shaming: 1) social cognitive or external, which refers to the thoughts of others who judge someone as inferior or lowly and assume that others also view them negatively, leading to low self-esteem. 2) Self-evaluation from within the individual, referring to the perception of oneself as inadequate, which begins with negative thoughts about oneself. This occurs due to hurtful criticism using demeaning words, which impacts the individual's self-confidence and fosters feelings of shame within them. 3) Emotions, feelings include anger, fear, and hatred within oneself. This occurs due to negative thoughts about oneself and the inability to comply with existing standards or rules. 4) Behavior, feelings of shame lead to a tendency to avoid one's environment. The discomfort created by the downward gaze of those around them makes them feel threatened. 5) Psychological: Shame makes someone feel pressured to conform to existing norms or rules. Additionally, eating disorders may arise from efforts to achieve a body shape that meets the ideal standards of the environment. Body shaming behavior can affect the psychological state of the victim, impacting their daily life physically, psychologically, and leading to withdrawal from their surroundings (Lestari, 2019). Body shaming is an experience individuals undergo when their perceived flaws are deemed negative by others due to their body shape. Therefore, this study focuses on determining the effect of body shaming on students' self-confidence. For this reason, the researcher is interested in conducting research on "The Effect of Body Shaming on Self-Confidence and the Implications of Counseling Guidance to Overcome This Problem in Students in Depok."

Methods

This study examines the effect of body shaming on self-confidence among students at SMK Yappa Depok. This is a quantitative descriptive study using a simple linear regression approach to determine the extent of the effect between the two variables. The population in this study consists of all 240 students at SMK Yappa Depok. Hypothesis testing in this study uses simple linear regression techniques with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software. The purpose of hypothesis testing is to test the regression between the two variables body shaming and self-confidence and to validate the formulated hypotheses.

Participant

The number of respondents in this study was 150 students, with 76 female students and 74 male students. All respondents were from class X of SMK Yappa Depok.

Sampling Procedures

The sampling technique used in this study was random sampling. Sugiyono (2021) defines random sampling as the selection of sample members from a population in a random manner without regard to the strata within that population.

Instrument

Data was collected through a questionnaire using a Likert scale that included two main instruments: Body shaming (2002) and self-confidence from Lauster (2003). Body shaming assessed five aspects, namely: Cognitive, Social, and External Components, Self-Evaluation Component, Emotional Component, Behavioral Component, and Psychological Component with 29 items, while self-confidence assesses five aspects, namely: Belief in Self-Ability, Optimism, Objectivity, Responsibility, Rationality, and Reality with 29 items. Each item in this scale has two types of statements with four answer choices: Always (SL), Often (S), Rarely (J), Never (TP). Each item in this scale has one type of statement, which is only a supporting statement.

Procedures

The materials and equipment used by researchers in conducting this study were mobile phones and Google Forms for distributing questionnaires. The independent variable was self-confidence, and the dependent variable was body shaming. This study aimed to examine the effect of body shaming on students' self-confidence.

Design or Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used linear regression in this study was IBM SPSS Statistics 20 for Windows.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study show that the variable (X) is body shaming, with a minimum value of 35, a maximum value of 116, a mean of 81.82, and a standard deviation of 17.502. Meanwhile, the variable (Y) is self-confidence, with a minimum value of 29, a maximum value of 78, a mean of 50.500, and a standard deviation of 8.533.

Tabel 1. Body Shaming Category

Score Interval	Category	f	%
≥ 102	Very High	20	13.3%
84-101	High	46	30.7%
66-83	Medium	59	39.3%
48-65	Low	17	11.3%
≤ 47	Very Low	8	5.3%
Totally		150	100

Based on the results of the table above, it can be seen that out of the total number of respondents tested, 150 students had very low levels of body shaming (8 students or 5.3%), low levels (17 students or 11.3%), moderate levels (59 students or 39.3%), high level 46 students or 30.7%, and very high level 20 students or 13.3%. The table above indicates that the overall level of body shaming falls into the moderate category. These scores were then used as a basis for determining the categorization of self-confidence data presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Self-Confidence category

Score Interval	Category	f	%
≥ 102	Very High	0	0%
84-101	High	0	0%
66-83	Medium	2	1.3%
48-65	Low	101	67.3%
≤ 47	Very Low	47	31.3%
Totally		150	100

Based on the results of the table above, it can be seen that from all the respondents tested, a total of 150 students who have very low self-confidence are 47 students or 31.3%, low level as many as 101 students or 67.3%,

medium level 2 students or 1.3%, high level 0 students or 0% and very high level as many as 0 students or 0%. The table above shows that the level of self-confidence is generally in the low category.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Test

	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	656.494	1	656.494	9.532	<.002
Residual	10193.006	148	68.872		
Total	10849.500	149			

The significance test table above is used to determine the significance level or linearity of the regression. The criteria can be determined based on the significance value (sig) test, with the condition that if the sig value is > 0.05. Based on the table above, the sig value is < 0.05, meaning sig is less than the significance criterion (0.05). Therefore, the regression equation model meets the criteria. It can be concluded that variable X (Body Shaming) has an effect on variable Y (Self-Confidence). This result indicates that H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted.

Table 4. Linear Regression Coefficient

	Unstandardized	Coefficients Std.Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	sig
(constant)	60.313	3.250		18.558	<.000
Bodyshaming	- 120	.039	-.246	-3.087	<.002

Based on the above equation, the constant value is 60.313. Systematically, this constant value indicates that when there is no body shaming, the level of self-confidence is 60.313. The negative value (-0.120) in the regression coefficient between the independent variable and the dependent variable indicates an inverse relationship, meaning that an increase in the body shaming variable leads to a decrease in the self-confidence variable. From the output above, it can be seen that the t-value is -3.087 with a significance level of $0.002 < 0.05$, so it can be concluded that the independent variable X (body shaming) has an effect on the dependent variable Y (self-confidence). This result indicates that H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted.

Table 5. Coefficient Determines

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.246	.061	.054		8.29890

Based on the table, the Adjusted R Squared value obtained was 0.061, indicating that body shaming contributed 6.1% to self-confidence, while the remaining 94.6% was influenced by other variables not examined in this study. Furthermore, this study also analyzed the influence of body shaming and self-confidence by gender, with blue representing male respondents and red representing female respondents. Data for both colors were evenly distributed, indicating that both men and women experienced body shaming in their social lives and interactions. However, upon closer inspection, the distribution of data in the female group appears to be wider, with a higher range of body shaming values compared to the male group. This suggests that women tend to be more frequent victims of negative comments about their bodies, both directly and through social media, and in many cases, the body shaming can be more severe or repetitive. This difference also shows an imbalance in body perception between men and women in society. In addition, the direction of the arrows in the visualization indicates a negative relationship between body shaming and self-confidence, meaning that the higher the level of body shaming experienced by an individual, the lower their self-confidence.

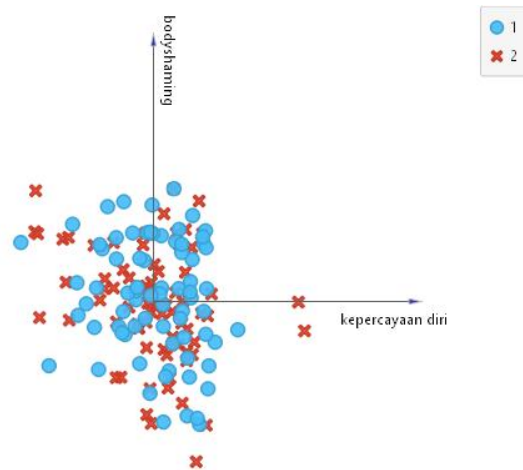


Figure 1. Body Shaming - Self-Confidence by Gender

Constant body shaming experienced by adolescents, especially women, has the potential to trigger relational aggression as an indirect social response. This differs from the findings in the study by Syahputra et al. (2024), which analyzed relational aggression based on gender among 510 respondents, consisting of 19.6% men and 80.4% women. The results showed that males had higher relational aggression scores than females, with a significance level of $p = 0.021$. This indicates a significant difference in the level of relational aggression between males and females. The study also found that relational aggression in males tends to be proactive in maintaining social dominance, while in females, relational aggression is more reactive.

The image 2 above shows that each type of social media, number 1 (TikTok), 2 (Instagram), and 3 (WhatsApp), has varying levels of exposure to body shaming. Type 1 social media (blue) shows a fairly high concentration of body shaming scores, with most respondents falling within the range of 80 to 100. This indicates that this type of social media has a high potential for body shaming to occur. Additionally, social media type 2 (red) also shows a high level of body shaming, with a fairly wide data distribution but still concentrated in the same range, around 70 to 100. Meanwhile, social media type 3 (green) has a more varied score distribution. Thus, social media types 1 and 2 have higher and more evenly distributed levels of body shaming compared to social media type 3. This indicates that certain types of social media tend to be more vulnerable to body shaming.

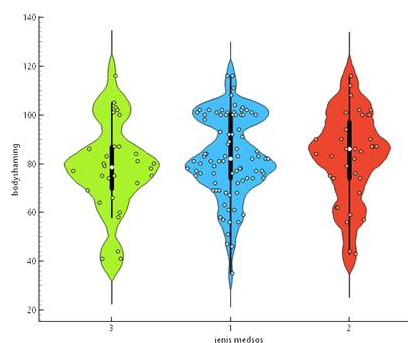


Figure 2. Body shaming by type

These results align with those of Sabilah et al. (2025), who found that social media use can lower adolescents' self-esteem by an average of 88.58 due to social pressure and physical expectations, which drive the emergence of narcissistic behavior as a form of compensation, and ultimately reflect low self-confidence. In contrast, the findings of Syahputra et al. (2024), which showed that social media addiction positively correlates with relational aggression ($r = 0.160$; $p = 0.00$), with 51.7% of respondents in the moderate addiction category and 47.8% exhibiting moderate relational aggression. This study emphasizes that excessive social media use can trigger covert aggressive behavior, but does not directly correlate with self-confidence or self-image.

These results align with (Yolanda et al., 2021), which showed a value of 0.560, greater than 0.374 (at a significance level of 5%, $df = 28$). This means that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, indicating a significant influence of body shaming on the self-confidence of 11th-grade students at SMAN 1 Batulayar in the 2020/2021 academic year. The results of Kasih et al. (2024) show that the calculated value of 1871.736 is greater than the table value of 0.39 ($df = 94$, $\alpha = 5\%$), so H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. The conclusion is that body shaming affects the self-confidence of students at Tjut Nyak Dhien University in Medan.

In line with Kamila (2023), body shaming has a negative effect on the self-confidence of male adolescents, with a coefficient of Puspa (2022) research shows that body shaming affects self-confidence in young adults in Karawang Regency. The results of the simple linear regression test show a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and an R^2 of 0.370, meaning that body shaming influences self-confidence by 37%, while 63% is influenced by factors outside this study. Khoirunisa et al.'s (2024) research shows that body shaming and the intensity of peer interaction significantly influence the self-confidence of adolescent girls in Paningggaran Subdistrict, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Simultaneously, both variables contribute 45% to self-confidence.

Regression -0.072 and significance 0.014 ($p < 0.05$). This means that the higher the body shaming, the lower the self-confidence. The body shaming variable contributes 2.6%, while 97.4% is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study. Febianto (2022) study shows that body shaming affects the self-confidence of the K-pop community in Surabaya, with an R^2 of 19.7%. The empirical F-value of 21.635 is greater than the critical F-value at 5% (2.53) and 1% (6.323), making the results significant and the hypothesis accepted. Nurfitri et al. (2023) used a scale method and random sampling technique. The statistical analysis results showed a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a significant influence between body shaming (X) and self-confidence (Y) among students at UIN Walisongo Semarang. These results are consistent with the research by Freshtin et al. (2023). The results show that $t\text{-count} -10.220 > t\text{-table } 2.013$ and significance $0.000 < 0.05$, so it is concluded that there is a significant negative effect of body shaming on the self-confidence of students in the Guidance and Counseling program at UKSW class of 2020. Irma Ni'matul Wakhidah's (2021) study used purposive sampling. The instruments used were the body shaming scale ($\alpha = 0.843$) and the self-confidence scale ($\alpha = 0.862$), both of which demonstrated good reliability.

The results of the study described above show that body shaming has a negative and significant effect on students' self-confidence, where the more often a person experiences body shaming, the lower their self-confidence level. This finding is in line with many previous studies that also show a strong relationship between negative treatment related to physical appearance and a decrease in self-confidence, both in adolescents and college students. Other studies have also found that pressure from social media exacerbates this condition, as many students feel they must meet certain physical standards to gain social acceptance. While some research highlights the impact of social media more toward aggressive or narcissistic behavior, overall, the results still point to the conclusion that body shaming and physical pressure from the surrounding environment, including social media, have a real and significant psychological impact on a person's self-confidence. It can be concluded that body shaming is a factor that needs to be taken seriously, as it has been proven to reduce students' self-confidence, both directly and through the influence of social pressure they experience.

Implication



The implications of this research are very important for implementing guidance and counseling programs that focus on students' personal problems. Guidance counselors must first understand the underlying causes of body shaming behavior during the learning process. Guidance counselors' abilities are also very much needed in providing appropriate guidance services to each student. Guidance counselors can take steps to reduce body shaming behavior while increasing students' self-confidence through several efforts. Guidance counselors can take steps to reduce body shaming behavior while boosting students' self-confidence through several efforts, such as providing individual counseling services, information services, and group counseling services. Guidance counselors can also offer CBT therapy focused on changing unhealthy thought patterns and behaviors, including negative self-perceptions and unrealistic beauty standards.

Conclusion

The study concludes that body shaming has a significant negative effect on students' self-confidence. Students who experience body shaming tend to show lower levels of confidence in themselves. The findings highlight the importance of addressing body shaming within the school environment, as it contributes to students' emotional and psychological vulnerability. Future research is encouraged to explore the underlying factors that shape students' insecurity and to develop school-based programs or counseling interventions that can help strengthen students' self-confidence and reduce the occurrence of body shaming.

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