

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND SOCIAL SUPPORT WITH LIFE SATISFACTION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and social support with the life satisfaction of junior high school students. It uses a literature review method as a way to address or highlight certain issues in providing reports that serve as the main data source for this study. The steps in the literature review include problem formulation, literature search, data evaluation, and analysis and interpretation. Relevant research sources include several national journals using the keywords: "life satisfaction adolescent," "life satisfaction," "self-esteem," and "social support," downloaded from Google Scholar, PubMed, and Sage Journals. The findings indicate that social support and self-esteem significantly influence life satisfaction, although the relationship between these variables is not always consistent across different contexts.

Keywords: Adolescent, life satisfaction, self-esteem, social support

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara harga diri dan dukungan sosial dengan kepuasan hidup siswa SMP. Ini menggunakan metode tinjauan literatur sebagai cara untuk mengatasi atau menyoroti masalah tertentu dalam menyediakan laporan yang berfungsi sebagai sumber data utama untuk penelitian ini. Langkah-langkah dalam tinjauan pustaka meliputi perumusan masalah, pencarian pustaka, evaluasi data, serta analisis dan interpretasi. Sumber penelitian yang relevan termasuk beberapa jurnal nasional yang menggunakan kata kunci: "kepuasan hidup remaja", "kepuasan hidup", "harga diri", dan "dukungan sosial", diunduh dari Google Scholar, PubMed, dan Sage Journals. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa dukungan sosial dan harga diri secara signifikan mempengaruhi kepuasan hidup, meskipun hubungan antara variabel ini tidak selalu konsisten dalam konteks yang berbeda.

Kata kunci: Remaja, kepuasan hidup, harga diri, dukungan sosial

INTRODUCTION

Junior high school students are in early adolescence, which, according to developmental theory, is marked by various physical, emotional, and social changes, as well as an intense search for self-identity (Hurlock, 1999). Middle-class adolescents, in particular, face complex challenges such as academic demands, parental expectations, peer pressure, and the influence of social media, which can negatively affect their psychological well-being (Yuliana, D., & Pratiwi, R. P., 2020). Research by Saraswati, E., & Oktaviani, R. (2021) shows that adolescents in secondary education often experience stress, anxiety, and

feelings of alienation, which, if not properly addressed, can reduce their level of life satisfaction.

Every individual, including adolescents, hopes to achieve life satisfaction. In this study, life satisfaction receives significant attention as one of the most established indicators of well-being and positive functioning among young people (Diener E., Lucas RE., Oishi S., 2017). Life satisfaction depends on a cognitive evaluation process, which is an overall assessment of the quality of life related to goal achievement (Hagenauer, G., Gläser-Zikuda, M., & Moschner, B., 2017). Adolescent life satisfaction has often been overlooked along with other positive indicators of optimal functioning (Proctor, C., Maltby, J., & Linley, P. A., 2017). Ehrlich & Isaacowitz (2002) noted a tendency for low life satisfaction among young people. For adolescents, life satisfaction is a key indicator of mental health and is positively associated with a wide range of personal, psychological, behavioral, social, interpersonal, and intrapersonal outcomes (Proctor et al., 2009).

There is evidence that increasing life satisfaction can prevent the negative effects of stress and psychological development (Proctor, 2017). For example, adolescents with positive life satisfaction are less likely to develop externalizing behaviors or socially problematic behaviors, such as acting out negatively (Zulnida et al., 2020), as a result of stressful life events compared to those with low life satisfaction. This suggests that life satisfaction acts as a moderator for externalizing behavior in adolescents (Suldo & Huebner, 2004). Additionally, the relationship between parental behavior and adolescent life satisfaction changes with age (Suldo & Huebner, 2004). Other studies also reveal a near-universal decline in life satisfaction during adolescence (Orben et al., 2021).

One important factor influencing adolescent life satisfaction is self-esteem or self-evaluation how positively they view themselves. Adolescents with high self-esteem tend to feel more satisfied with their lives because they can better cope with challenges and social pressures. Raharja & Indati (2018) stated that when physiological, safety, and social needs are met, adolescents will have positive self-esteem. Moreover, social support from family, friends, and the school environment plays a major role in enhancing psychological well-being and helping adolescents navigate developmental challenges, where the need for social acceptance and self-identity is high (Wills & Shinar, 2000; Fitriani, 2022; DuBois et al., 2002). According to Chen & Matthews (2001), adolescents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face different challenges, such as limited access to educational resources, fewer opportunities for extracurricular participation, and inadequate social support, all of which can affect their self-esteem and life satisfaction. Other factors influencing adolescent life satisfaction are diverse. The relationship between sociodemographic factors age, gender, socioeconomic status (SES) and life satisfaction is reported to be weak, and other studies show these variables contribute little to predicting adolescent life satisfaction (Moksnes et al., 2022).

Overall, the interconnection between self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction highlights the importance of a holistic approach in supporting adolescent development. Early adolescents, especially those transitioning from elementary to junior high school, are heavily influenced by surrounding psychosocial factors. This study specifically aims

to explore the relationship between self-esteem and social support with life satisfaction among students a group undergoing significant emotional and social changes. In the educational context, the presence of guidance and counseling services in schools is a strategic means to help students achieve optimal development. According to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2019), the ultimate goal of counseling services is to help students achieve emotional, social, and academic well-being to support their life and educational success. Effective guidance services are also expected to support personality development, strengthen self-concept, build healthy social relationships, and guide students toward a positive quality of life (Gysbers & Henderson, 2012).

METHOD

This study uses a literature review method, as it allows researchers to gather various relevant previous research sources on the same topic. The researcher searched for articles on adolescent life satisfaction using search tools or applications such as PubMed, Google Scholar, and Sage Journals. These platforms were chosen for their ease of access and practical filtering capabilities. To find relevant articles, the researcher used keywords in both English and Indonesian: life satisfaction adolescent, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and social support. The use of English keywords aimed to obtain articles written by both international and Indonesian researchers published in international journals. The researcher established criteria for selecting articles to be included in the literature review. The first criterion was that the articles must have been published within the last five years (2019–2024), ensuring relevance and up-to-date empirical data. The second criterion was that the study participants must be adolescents. The third criterion was that the articles must be written in either English or Indonesian.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the article search results, 30 articles were found to be related to self-esteem, social support, and life satisfaction, originating from both Indonesia and abroad. These selected articles were analyzed comprehensively, and the most significant ones were identified using a structured format for summarization. After analyzing the articles, the researcher selected 8 articles based on the analysis and the previously established criteria. The results of the analysis of these 8 selected articles are presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Matrix of the Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Social Support with Life Satisfaction of Junior High School Students from Middle Socioeconomic Backgrounds.

No	Author	Key Findings
1.	Ozer, S. (2024).	The study found that social support received from friends and family is related to individual well-being through the mediating role of self-efficacy and self-esteem. This reflects that students' perceptions of themselves as resources in facing challenges are influenced by the various forms of social support they receive. The findings emphasize the importance of perceived social support as a key determinant of psychological well-being. Consistent with previous correlational studies, the results also show that self-esteem mediates the relationship between loneliness and well-being. However, in this study, no statistically significant changes were found in variables such as social support, self-efficacy, self-esteem, perceived stress, or life satisfaction among Danish students between the lockdown period and the reopening phase during COVID-19.
2.	Weng, Fangyu. 2023.	The study found that adolescents with high self-esteem tend to have more positive relationships with their school and social environments, are able to apply adaptive coping strategies, and express their identities more authentically. These findings suggest that efforts to enhance school connectedness, strengthen social support, and build positive self-perceptions can significantly contribute to adolescents' psychological well-being.
3.	Lee, SeoYoung. 2020	The study revealed that positive social comparisons among Facebook users and the level of social support received significantly influence life satisfaction, with self-esteem acting as a mediator. Specifically, feelings of envy toward other users tend to lower self-esteem, which negatively affects individual satisfaction. Conversely, adequate social support contributes to increased self-esteem, which in turn enhances users' life satisfaction. These findings highlight the central role of self-esteem in mediating the impact of social media dynamics and social support on psychological well-being.
4.	Russ, Najwa Mat., et al. 2021	The study found no significant relationship between social support and self-esteem, nor between social support and life satisfaction among adolescents. Additionally, self-esteem did not

		serve as a mediating variable in the relationship between social support and life satisfaction. These findings suggest that social support is not a determining factor in shaping self-esteem or life satisfaction in adolescents. This may reflect a shift in adolescent orientation, where social support is no longer considered a primary source in evaluating their life well-being.
5.	Kim, Eun Hye & Choong Rai Nho. 2020	The study found that self-esteem, family support, and life satisfaction remained consistently stable over a four-year period and were positively and significantly correlated, except for life satisfaction, which did not show an influence on family support. These findings provide a foundation for various social service institutions, including school social workers and Multicultural Family Support Centers, to develop programs aimed at enhancing self-esteem, family support systems, and life satisfaction among multicultural adolescents in Korea.
6.	Rahmat, hawa., et al. 2019	The study highlights the need for further research on personality and related constructs such as social support and self-esteem to evaluate their impact on university students' life satisfaction. A deeper understanding of the factors that predict and support resilience against physical health issues, suicide risk, and survival is believed to improve students' health quality and academic success. These findings have the potential to enrich the body of knowledge in the field of subjective well-being (SWB), particularly concerning life satisfaction among university students in Malaysia.
7.	Asif, Muhammad. 2019	The study found no significant differences in perceived social support from family based on gender, but there were significant differences in perceived support from friends. Additionally, female students were found to have higher life satisfaction levels compared to male students, while no significant differences were found in self-esteem levels between genders. Another finding indicated that the higher the perception of social support, the higher the level of self-esteem, although paradoxically, this was correlated with lower life satisfaction. These findings have important implications for educators, counselors, psychologists, and researchers in designing

		strategies to enhance students' perception of social support to improve their psychological well-being.
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Based on Table 1, overall research findings indicate that social support and self-esteem play important roles in life satisfaction, although the relationships among these three variables are not always consistent.

1. The Relationship Between Social Support, Self-Esteem, and Life Satisfaction

Research from various sources shows a complex interconnection between social support, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Most studies support the assumption that adequate social support contributes positively to psychological well-being through the enhancement of self-esteem (Ozer, 2024; Lee, 2022; Weng, 2023). This aligns with the theory of subjective well-being (SWB), which identifies social support and positive self-perception as two key components in shaping individual life satisfaction. One variable closely related to life satisfaction is perceived social support (Diener et al., 2018). Furthermore, social support whether from friends, family, or the broader social environment positively contributes to self-esteem, which in turn affects life satisfaction.

Social support refers to comfort, care, appreciation, or assistance received by individuals from others or groups (Sarafino & Smith, 2011). It is considered an external source that provides a sense of acceptance, love, and appreciation from the social environment. When this support is well received, individuals tend to have a more positive self-assessment (including high self-esteem), which subsequently enhances their overall evaluation of life. A study by Lee (2022) supports this pattern, showing that social support indirectly influences life satisfaction through the mediation of self-esteem. Social support also helps adolescents build a sense of self-worth, which in turn increases their life satisfaction (Wentzel, 1998). Therefore, the importance of social support in shaping adolescent well-being cannot be overlooked, as it is one of the main factors supporting emotional and psychological development.

Another variable discussed is self-esteem, which consistently emerges as a key factor in bridging the influence of social support on life satisfaction. In this context, self-esteem functions as a mediating variable. Research by Ozer (2024) and Lee (2022) found that individuals who perceive themselves as valuable and competent (self-liking and self-competence) are better able to utilize social support optimally to achieve well-being. Thus, self-esteem can be considered a crucial psychological construct for life sustainability (Branden, 1969). As stated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), self-esteem is one of the basic human needs, positioned after physiological needs, safety, love, and belonging. Healthy self-esteem encourages individuals to reach their highest potential (self-actualization).

However, not all findings show consistent relationships. Research by Russ, Najwa Mat., et al. (2021) found no significant relationship between social support and self-esteem or life satisfaction among adolescents. Moreover, self-esteem did not act as a mediator. This

suggests that the effectiveness of this mediating role is contextual, depending on age, culture, or individual experiences. It may reflect a shift in adolescent values or orientation, where social support is no longer considered the primary source for building self-perception or personal satisfaction. These findings challenge theoretical assumptions and open the possibility that the psychosocial dynamics of today's adolescents are undergoing a value shift. Modern adolescents may rely more on internal factors, such as achievement or self-recognition, rather than external factors like social support.

Asif (2019) noted that while high social support does increase self-esteem, it does not always enhance life satisfaction and may even correlate negatively in some cases. This indicates that the relationships among psychological variables are not linear and can be influenced by other contextual factors such as gender, source of support, and cultural and social background

2. Contextual Factors: Age, Culture, and Social Media

Other factors influencing adolescent life satisfaction are highly diverse. The relationship between sociodemographic factors, such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status (SES) and life satisfaction is reported to be weak, and other studies also show that these variables contribute minimally to predicting adolescent life satisfaction (Moksnes et al., 2022). Differences in findings between studies suggest that the relationship among the three variables (social support, self-esteem, and life satisfaction) is not independent of contextual factors. For example, research by Kim & Nho (2020) in Korea shows that the relationship between self-esteem, family support, and life satisfaction remained stable over a four-year period. This indicates that in certain populations particularly those with strong family support and collectivist values the psychological relationships among these variables can remain consistent over time.

Meanwhile, Lee (2022) highlights the context of social media, where interactions among Facebook users introduce new dynamics in social comparison. Feelings of envy toward other users tend to lower self-esteem, which in turn reduces life satisfaction. Conversely, social support received through digital platforms can strengthen self-esteem and enhance life satisfaction. This underscores the importance of perceived meaning and subjective interpretation of social interactions, rather than merely the quantity of relationships. For instance, social support received through digital interactions—such as positive comments, supportive messages, or warm conversations can significantly boost self-esteem and reinforce life satisfaction. This shows that what matters is not just the medium (platform), but the quality of interaction that occurs within it.

Other research in the context of higher education, such as Rahmat et al. (2019), emphasizes the importance of deeply understanding the constructs of self-esteem and social support to support students' psychological resilience in facing academic challenges, health issues, and suicide risk. Social support and self-esteem are not only crucial for emotional well-being but also impact academic persistence and achievement. Findings from Kim & Nho (2020) reinforce the importance of long-term interventions, as

the constructs of self-esteem, family support, and life satisfaction have proven to be stable over a four-year period. This can be utilized by educational institutions, social services, and psychological intervention programs to develop long-term strategies.

Ultimately, these findings lead to an important conclusion: self-esteem plays a central role in determining how much social support can enhance life satisfaction. Therefore, psychological interventions that aim to improve self-esteem—either directly or indirectly through strengthening social support—are essential for enhancing individual well-being, especially among adolescents and university students.

CONCLUSION

Social support and self-esteem play significant roles in life satisfaction, although the relationships among these variables are not always consistent across different contexts. Most studies show that strong social support contributes to increased self-esteem, which in turn positively affects life satisfaction. Self-esteem serves as a significant mediating variable in bridging the influence of social support on life satisfaction. In other words, social support tends to have a positive impact on life satisfaction when individuals possess high self-esteem. However, not all findings show significant relationships. Some studies reveal that social support is not always directly related to self-esteem or life satisfaction. This suggests that other contextual factors, such as age, culture, and sources of social support can influence the dynamics among these variables. Additionally, gender may also be a differentiating factor, particularly in life satisfaction, where females are often reported to have higher levels of life satisfaction compared to males, although no significant differences are found in terms of self-esteem. Therefore, school-based, family-based, and social service-based intervention programs hold great potential to enhance the psychological well-being of adolescents and students by strengthening social support systems and fostering healthy self-esteem in a sustainable manner.

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