

## The Relationship of Social Media Use with Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence

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### *Abstract*

The use of social media is common among adolescents, the use of social media can affect self-concept in adolescents, one of which is self-esteem. This study aims to examine the relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents. The method in this study is a quantitative research method using a cross-sectional design. This research was conducted at SMP 13 Pekanbaru with a sample of 270 respondents who were taken based on inclusion criteria with purposive sampling technique. The instruments used in this study were Social Networking Time Use Scale (SONTUS) and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES). The results showed that the majority of respondents were 13 years old as many as 130 people (48.1%), and the majority were female as many as 152 people (56.3%). The results of the Pearson chi-square statistical test obtained a p-value = 0.334 ( $p > 0.05$ ) so it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents. Adolescents who use social media in the moderate category have high self-esteem. Future researchers can conduct qualitative research related to the relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents related to this study.

Keywords: self esteem, social media, adolescence

### **Introduction**

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood, during which physical, cognitive and emotional changes occur<sup>1</sup>. This period is also known as the period of self-standardization because teenagers try to find their identity. Relationships with peers and social relationships are very important for teenagers, especially early teens<sup>2</sup>. In building relationships with peers, one of them is teenagers using social media. This phenomenon in teenagers is increasingly common and important in their daily lives, where social media is used as a tool to interact with peers, to get information, and build social identity.<sup>3</sup>. The use of social media has increased rapidly along with the growth of internet use<sup>4</sup>. Based on survey results from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association for 2021-2022 internet penetration Indonesia reached 77.02% in 2021 to 2022, which is an increase from the previous year. Based on the age range, the highest internet penetration is in the 13-18 year age group.

The use of social media has positive and negative impacts on teenagers, among the positive impacts are that social media can be used as a medium for friendship, a means of exchanging information, increasing insight, as a medium for doing business. *online*, increase interaction, obtain information and can also develop skills in using technology, apart from that

social media can also cause harm such as the occurrence of arguments on social media, as a place for disseminating inappropriate photos, the occurrence of *cyberbullying*, there is a decrease in face-to-face activities and an increase in social comparisons which can affect adolescents' self-concept<sup>5</sup>.

Opportunities for teens to engage in social comparison have increased with the rise of social media, where users post and view information about others more easily, which impacts how teens develop their sense of self as they can evaluate appearances and other displays of other individuals.<sup>6</sup> Social media use can encourage teenagers to engage in more negative social comparison behavior which can lead to low self-esteem which in turn can also lead to problems in mental health.<sup>7,8</sup>

Self-esteem is an individual's assessment of himself based on how well his behavior matches his ideal self<sup>1</sup>. Self-esteem plays an important role in a person's mental health and quality of life, because the evaluations and beliefs that individuals make about themselves determine who, what they do, and what kind of individual they become.<sup>9</sup> Self-esteem will increase with age and is most threatened in adolescence. Low self-esteem or *low self esteem* identified as one of the causes of various problems faced by teenagers today. Self-esteem is very important for adolescents to help overcome basic life challenges, such as psychological adjustment, physical satisfaction, academic success, health and social relationships with others.<sup>10</sup> Factors of self-esteem include rejection from parents, unrealistic parental expectations, repeated failures, lack of personal responsibility, dependence on others and unrealistic self-ideals.<sup>11,12</sup> Longitudinal research conducted by Plackett et al in 2022 found that self-esteem may play a role in the relationship between social media use and mental health<sup>13</sup>.

Based on the results of a preliminary study conducted at SMP 13 Pekanbaru regarding self-esteem and also the use of social media among 20 students. There were 14 out of 20 students who said that they sometimes felt embarrassed to speak in front of the class, and 16 out of 20 students felt hesitant in expressing opinions or asking questions while studying, 12 out of 20 students felt difficult in making decisions and felt inadequate, 14 out of 20 students often felt offended by other people's words or actions. Overall, all students have social media including

WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok. Based on the results of interviews with 10 teenage students at SMP N 13 Pekanbaru, data was obtained that 6 people said they had received teasing about themselves from social media, such as female students who had received teasing regarding their physical shape and male students who had received teasing regarding their skills in playing football. Apart from that, female students also felt that other people were better than themselves and compared themselves with others regarding academics, 4 people said they rarely expressed their feelings with their parents, 7 people said they used social media to improve their mood, 5 people said that when using social media they forgot about the time. Based on the phenomenon above, researchers want to know whether there is a relationship between the use of social media and self-esteem in early adolescents at SMP N 13 Pekanbaru.

## Methods

This research method is a quantitative method with an approach *cross sectional*. The population in this study were early adolescents aged 12-14 years, namely students in class VII and VII at SMP Negeri 13 Pekanbaru, totaling 821 people. The sampling technique used in this research is technique *stratified random sampling* and using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 5% to calculate the overall research size. The sample size in this study was 270 people.

The instrument used for this research is a questionnaire for social media use *Social Networking Time Time Use Scale* (SONTUS) which consists of 29 question items, has 11 scales in the form of time categories and has been tested with a validity above 0.74 and a reliability value of 0.93. Questionnaire for self-esteem viz *Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale* This questionnaire contains 10 items. Instrument validity and reliability test values *Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale* Indonesian version, namely  $r \geq 0.361$  ( $r$  table 0.361) and value *Cronbach's Alpha* of 0.843.

The data analysis used in the research is univariate analysis to see a description of the characteristics of the respondents, namely age, gender of the respondent and to see a picture of the independent variable, namely use of social media, as well as a picture of the dependent variable, namely self-esteem. And bivariate analysis to see the relationship between the independent variable, namely

the use of social media and the dependent variable, namely self-esteem in early adolescents. The statistical test used in this research is the test *chi-square*. This research has been declared ethically appropriate by Decree Number 967/UN19.5.1.8/KEPK.FKp/2023.

## Results

### 1. Respondent Characteristics

**Table 1**  
**Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics**

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
12	91	33,7%
13	130	48,1%
14	49	18,1%
<b>Gender</b>		
Man	118	43,7%
Woman	152	56,3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on table 1, it shows that of the 270 students, the majority were 13 years old, 130 students (48.1%), and 152 students (56.3%).

### 2. Overview of Social Media Use

**Table 2**  
**Distribution of Respondents Based on Social Media Use**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	55	20,4%
Currently	141	52,2%
High	59	21,9%
Very high	15	5,6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on table 2, it shows that the majority of social media users are in the moderate category, 141 people (52.2%). The use of social media in the high category was 59 people (21.9%). The low category of social media use was 55 people (20.4%). The use of social media in the very high category was 15 people (5.6%).

### 3. Overview of Self-Esteem

**Table 3**  
**Distribution of Respondents Based on Self-Esteem**

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	91	33,7%
High	179	66,3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on table 3, it shows that most of the respondents' self-esteem was in the high category, 179 people (66.3%). Respondents with low self-esteem were 91 people (33.7%).

### 4. The Relationship of Social Media Use with Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence

**Table 4**  
**The Relationship of Social Media Use with Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence**

Use of Social Media	Self Esteem				Total	<i>p value</i>	
	Low		High				
	n	%	N	%	n	%	
Low	13	23,6%	42	76,4%	55	100%	0,334
Currently	52	36,9%	89	63,1%	141	100%	
High	20	33,9%	39	66,1%	59	100%	
Very high	6	40,0%	9	60,0%	15	100%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>33,7%</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>66,3%</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Based on table 4, the results of the analysis of the relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents show that the use of social media among adolescents is in the medium category as many as 141 people with high self-esteem as many as 89 people (63.1%). The use of social media in the high category was 59 people with high self-esteem as many as 39 people (66.1%). The use of social media in the low category was 55 people with high self-esteem being 42 people (76.4%). The use of social media in the very high category was 15 people with high self-esteem as many as 9 people (60.0%). Statistical test results *Chi Square* using test *Person Chi Square* with the 4x2 table the values are obtained *p value* 0,334 (*p value* > 0.05) which means Ho

failed to be rejected, so it can be concluded that there is no relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents.

## **Discussion**

### **1. Respondent Characteristics**

Based on the results of the research, it was found that the majority of respondents were 13 years old, 130 people (48.1%). This age is included in the early adolescent stage, namely 12-14 years, who are at the stage of developing their identity. Where teenagers are aware of their physical appearance and social behavior, and also seek acceptance from their peers. Peer influence is a fundamental psychosocial problem of adolescence<sup>14</sup>. Likewise, research conducted by Pratama and Sari in 2020 found that the majority of 13 year old teenagers, 56.7%, stated that today's teenagers use social media to interact with their peers.<sup>15</sup>

Based on the research results, it was found that the majority of respondents were female, 152 students (56.3%). Likewise, research by Lestari et al in 2020 found that the majority of respondents using social media were female, 80.2%. Where for girls, social media can reduce the stress they feel and girls tend to like interacting or communicating with other people through social media compared to boys who prefer to play. *game*<sup>16</sup>.

### **2. Overview of Social Media Use**

The results of research regarding the use of social media showed that the majority of respondents were in the moderate category, 141 people (52.2%). The category of social media use is classified as moderate, which can be influenced by school policies which prohibit students from using it *gadget* to school, and the role of parents in limiting use *gadget* in teenagers at home. The role of parents or older people such as older siblings, teachers is really needed during early adolescence who are in the transition or puberty period, to direct and supervise the use of *gadget*<sup>17</sup>. The role of parents in controlling use *gadget* including limiting the time of use *gadget*, be selective in choosing applications, accompany children in use *gadget*, train responsible use *gadget* in children<sup>18,19</sup>.

This research is in line with research conducted by Merinsky et al (2023) which also found that social media use among junior high school teenagers was in the moderate category at 73%. Where the aspect that makes the use of social media among teenagers is that teenagers feel that if they are more active on social media, they will be easily recognized by many people, through social media it makes it easier for teenagers to show off their strengths to get an instant image, and makes it easier for teenagers to look for new things on social media.<sup>20</sup>.

### **3. Overview of Self-Esteem**

The research results showed that most of the respondents' self-esteem was in the high category, 179 people (66.3%). Where teenagers have good self-evaluation, accept their own strengths and weaknesses, are able to achieve the hopes they want to achieve and are able to express themselves<sup>2</sup>. Self-esteem has an important role in improving the well-being of adolescents. In line with research conducted by Sitio (2019) that there is a significant positive relationship between self-esteem in adolescents and their level of psychological well-being. If self-esteem is high, adolescents' psychological well-being will also increase<sup>18</sup>.

### **4. The Relationship of Social Media Use with Self-Esteem in Early Adolescence**

Statistical test results *Chi Square* value obtained *p value* 0,334 (*p value* > 0.05) which means  $H_0$  failed to be rejected, which means there is no relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents. Usually teenagers use social media for entertainment, communicating with peers, and broadening their knowledge. Among the benefits obtained, the use of social media also has an impact, namely: *cyberbullying*, the distribution of inappropriate photos directly decreases activity and increases the occurrence of social comparisons<sup>5,30</sup>. Social comparison can be associated with a decrease in self-esteem in individuals. In line with research conducted by Sari and Suarya (2018) it was found that social comparison is related to self-esteem, where individuals view themselves negatively which will later influence the

individual's self-image.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, research conducted by Ratri (2018) found that there is a relationship between the use of social media and self-esteem in adolescents, where if the use of social media is higher, self-esteem will be lower.<sup>22</sup>

This is different from research conducted by researchers who found that the use of social media in early adolescents was in the medium category with high self-esteem as many as 89 people (63.1%). Where the use of social media in early teens does not affect their self-esteem. This research is in line with research by Steinsbekk et al (2021) which found that there is no relationship between social media use and self-esteem.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, research conducted by Plackett et al (2022) regarding the impact of social media use on adolescent mental health, found that there was no significant effect of social media use on self-esteem.<sup>22</sup>

Many factors influence self-esteem, including self-acceptance or contempt, popularity, family and parents, openness and anxiety, individual development, unrealistic self-ideals.<sup>23,24</sup> Based on the results of research conducted by Prihandini and Boediman (2019) regarding the relationship between self-esteem and the role of fathers, it shows significant results between self-esteem and father involvement in the psychological well-being of adolescents.<sup>25</sup> The results of research regarding social factors and self-esteem in adolescents in orphanages have a significant relationship, where adolescents spend more time in their social environment.<sup>26</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The results of research that has been carried out regarding "The Relationship between Social Media Use and Self-Esteem in Early Adolescents" on 270 respondents can be concluded that the majority of respondents are 13 years old, female. The majority of social media use in this study was in the moderate category with a high level of self-esteem. Based on statistical tests, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between the use of social media and self-esteem in early adolescents. Teenagers who use social media in the moderate category have high self-esteem.

A limitation in this research is that in filling out the SONTUS social media use questionnaire, some of the respondents did not understand how to fill out the questionnaire. It is hoped that future researchers will be able to further develop research on the use of social media and self-esteem in early adolescents regarding other factors that influence self-acceptance and self-deprecation and unrealistic self-ideals, and future researchers can also conduct qualitative research regarding the relationship between social media use and self-esteem in early adolescents to be able to dig deeper into this research.

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