

INFORMASI ARTIKEL

Received: May, 19, 2026

Revised: June, 01, 2026

Available online: June, 02, 2026

at: <https://e-jurnal.ipphorr.com/index.php/mhc>

The relationship between self-esteem and depression among middle adolescents

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Mental health problems can occur in adolescents due to deviant behavior and curiosity that can negatively affect actions and emotions, even causing depression. Depression causes serious repercussions such as symptoms of hopelessness, high stress, lack of confidence, and even suicidal ideation or attempts. Suicidal ideation and attempts can be exacerbated by self-esteem. Self-esteem in adolescents will affect the feelings that arise, but adolescents often manage in an ineffective way, which can exacerbate depression.

Purpose: To determine the relationship between self-esteem and the incidence of depression in middle adolescents.

Method: This study used a cross sectional design. Respondents of this study were middle adolescents aged 15-18 years and the sample size was 311 respondents with proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The research instrument used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) questionnaires. The analysis test used the Spearman Rank test.

Results: The results of the Spearman Rank test in the study obtained a p-value = 0.001 ($p < 0.05$) and a Correlation Coefficient (r) of -0.287.

Conclusion: There is a relationship between self-esteem and the incidence of depression in middle adolescence with a relationship in the low category.

Keywords: Adolescents; Depression; Self-esteem.

INTRODUCTION

Poor mental health can develop into serious mental disorders, resulting in significant negative impacts on both individual health and social functioning (Bitsko, Claussen, Lichstein, Black, Jones, Danielson, & Ghandour, 2022). Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by increased vulnerability to deviant behaviors due to heightened curiosity and exploration. This curiosity may expose adolescents to negative influences and behaviors that are considered socially unacceptable, leading to emotional instability, elevated stress levels, and even depression (Desi, Felita, & Kinasih, 2020). Government efforts to address mental health problems have included the provision of comprehensive facilities covering promotive,

preventive, and curative services. Psychologists are available to provide professional assistance, and referral systems have been established for individuals requiring more intensive mental health care. The management of mental health problems may involve various approaches, ranging from prevention to rehabilitation, including emotion-focused coping strategies, expressive and relaxation therapies, and keroncong music therapy (Tyas, Pertiwi, & Nisa, 2023).

The consequences of mental health problems among adolescents include irregular eating patterns, sleep disturbances, overweight and obesity, impaired immune system functioning, and even suicidal ideation and suicide attempts (Osborn, Wasanga, &

Ndetei, 2022). Suicidal thoughts and behaviours are more likely to occur among adolescents experiencing depression and may be influenced by biological, psychosocial, and psychological factors. One of the most important psychological factors associated with depression is self-esteem (Pramesti, 2019). Self-esteem refers to an individual's evaluation and appreciation of themselves, which can be either positive or negative (Angelina & Christanti, 2021). Self-esteem is generally classified into two categories: high and low self-esteem (Limupa & Primanita, 2022). Adolescents with high self-esteem tend to feel satisfied with themselves, experience a sense of acceptance, recognize their valuable qualities, and maintain a sense of self-worth even during difficult circumstances, while also benefiting from adequate psychological support (Pardede, Hutajulu, & Pasaribu, 2020).

In contrast, adolescents with low self-esteem often exhibit characteristics such as feelings of inferiority, passivity, apathy, social withdrawal, hopelessness, and high levels of fear and anxiety. These characteristics indicate that their psychological and social needs are not being adequately fulfilled (Febristi, 2020). Although adolescents attempt to manage the emotions they experience, ineffective coping strategies may increase stress levels and contribute to the development of depression (Ariyanti & Purwoko, 2023). Adolescents aged 15–18 years are particularly susceptible to fluctuations in self-esteem that may contribute to depression. This age group experiences substantial physical, emotional, and social changes compared to other stages of adolescence. When adolescents encounter difficulties

adapting to these developmental changes, their self-esteem may decline, increasing their vulnerability to depressive symptoms (Ospino, Colorado, Arregocés, Gamarra-Vega, González, & Sotelo-Manjarres, 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

Quantitative method, descriptive-correlational approach with a cross-sectional design. The unit of analysis in this study is the individual. The study population consists of students aged 15–18 years. The data collection approach used Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling, with the resulting sample distributed across each class based on major. The sample was selected using students' attendance numbers in multiples of 4. The sample size was 311 respondents. Data analysis was performed using the Spearman Rank test. The independent variable in this study was self-esteem, while the dependent variable was the occurrence of depression. Income level was categorized according to the Bantul Regency Minimum Wage (Rp 2.216.463/month): low income ($\leq$ Rp 2.216.463) and high income ($>$ Rp 2.216.463). Self-esteem was measured using a standardized self-esteem questionnaire and categorized into three levels: high, moderate, and low. Higher scores indicated better self-esteem, whereas lower scores reflected poorer self-esteem. Depression was assessed using a standardized depression scale and classified into five categories: normal, mild, moderate, moderately severe, and severe depression. Higher scores indicated greater severity of depressive symptoms.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics (N = 311)

Variable	Results	R	P-Value
Age (n/%) (Mean$\pm$SD) (Range) (Year)	($\pm$) (15-18)		
15	34/11.0		
16	71/22.8		
17	103/33.1		
18	103/33.1		
Gender (n/%)			
Male	264/84.9		

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Doi: 10.56922/mhc.v5i2.3319

Female	47/15.1		
Education (n/%)			
Not Enrolled In School	15/4.8		
Enrolled In school	296/95.2		
Parental Income (n/%)			
Under Bantul Minimum Wage	211/67.8		
Above The Minimum Wage In Bantul	100/32.2		
Self-Esteem (n/%)			
High	40/12.8	-.287	0.001(<0.05)
Moderate	268/86.2		
Low	3/1.0		
Depression (n/%)			
Minimal	158/50.8		
Light	110/35.4		
Moderate	31/10.0		
Moderately Heavy	10/3.2		
Heavy	2/0.6		

Based on the table, most respondents were aged 17 and 18 years, with 103 respondents (33.1%) in each age group, followed by those aged 16 years with 71 respondents (22.8%) and 15 years with 34 respondents (11.0%). In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were male, accounting for 264 respondents (84.9%), while 47 respondents (15.1%) were female. Most respondents were enrolled in school, with 296 respondents (95.2%), whereas 15 respondents (4.8%) were not enrolled in school. Regarding parental income, the majority of respondents came from families with incomes below the Bantul Minimum Wage, totalling 211 respondents (67.8%), while 100 respondents (32.2%) had parental incomes above the Bantul Minimum Wage. For the self-esteem variable, most respondents had moderate self-esteem, accounting for 268 respondents (86.2%), followed by high self-esteem with 40 respondents (12.8%) and low self-esteem with 3 respondents (1.0%). Regarding depression levels, the majority of respondents experienced minimal depression, with 158 respondents (50.8%), followed by mild depression with 110 respondents (35.4%), moderate depression with 31 respondents (10.0%), moderately severe depression with 10 respondents (3.2%), and severe depression with 2 respondents (0.6%). The

correlation analysis revealed a correlation coefficient (r) of -0.287 and a p-value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression. The negative correlation suggests that higher levels of self-esteem are associated with lower levels of depression, and vice versa.

DISCUSSION

Middle adolescents with good self-esteem are generally able to cope positively with life changes, appreciate themselves as they are without excessive self-admiration, and do not perceive themselves as superior to others. Although they may occasionally feel uncertain about their self-evaluation, they are capable of recovering from challenges and difficulties. Such characteristics contribute to inner peace and support positive mental health outcomes (Yani & Retnowuni, 2020).

Adolescents with high self-esteem also tend to demonstrate strong self-confidence, gratitude, resilience, positive adaptation to life changes, concern for their mental and physical well-being, and the ability to adjust effectively to various situations, including social interactions (Niman & Surbakti, 2022).

In contrast, low self-esteem may develop through

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Doi: 10.56922/mhc.v5i2.3319

the internalization of negative life experiences, such as childhood trauma, which can influence how adolescents perceive themselves within a social context. Consequently, they are more likely to experience feelings of inferiority, maintain negative self-perceptions, and encounter difficulties recovering from problems and failures (Pramesti, 2024). This finding is consistent with theories suggesting that self-esteem is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors involve an individual's evaluation of how they are accepted and valued by others, while external factors include the social environment in which they live and interact (Utama, Pramesti, & Mahfud, 2023).

Minimal depression refers to a condition characterized by a temporary low mood or "blue days," accompanied by at least one major depressive symptom occurring for a minimum duration of approximately two weeks (Nareswari & Gunadi, 2021; Ningtyas, Puspitasari, & Sinuraya, 2018). The low prevalence of depressive symptoms among middle adolescents may be attributed to positive social support, healthy personal development, supportive family relationships, and conducive school and community environments, all of which contribute to emotional maturity and psychological well-being (Hidayat, Ramadhani, Nursyifa, & Afiyanti, 2020).

Mild depression is characterized by episodes of low mood that fluctuate over time, often occurring after specific stressful events, accompanied by feelings of anxiety and reduced enthusiasm. This condition includes at least two major depressive symptoms and two minor depressive symptoms lasting for at least two weeks (Maslim, 2019). Adolescents experiencing mild depression generally report feelings of sadness, anxiety, and decreased motivation that remain within a manageable range but should not be overlooked (Rahmawati & Elita, 2025).

Moderate depression is defined by the presence of at least two major depressive symptoms and three to four minor symptoms for a minimum duration of two weeks. Moderately severe depression involves at least two major symptoms and five or more minor symptoms without psychotic features such as hallucinations or delusions (Maslim, 2019; Nareswari & Gunadi, 2021; Ningtyas et al., 2018). Adolescents experiencing moderate or moderately severe depression often exhibit persistent low mood,

impaired daily functioning, unexplained fear, social withdrawal, and difficulties related to family conflict, academic pressures, interpersonal relationships, or financial problems. In such cases, lifestyle modifications alone are insufficient, and professional intervention is often required.

Severe depression is characterized by at least two major depressive symptoms and five or more minor symptoms of high intensity, frequently accompanied by psychotic features such as hallucinations, delusions, or other severe disturbances, with symptoms persisting for at least two weeks (Maslim, 2019; Nareswari, 2021; Ningtyas et al., 2018). Adolescents with severe depression may experience overwhelming negative emotions, loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities, excessive guilt, social isolation, avoidance of daily activities, changes in appetite and sleep patterns, fatigue, loneliness, sadness, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideation. This finding is consistent with Beck's theory, which describes depression as a mental condition characterized by changes in mood, emotions, cognition, and behavior. Individuals with depression frequently experience sadness, loneliness, low self-worth, and a tendency to withdraw from social relationships (Dewi, Sebayang, Hapsah, & Purwoningrum, 2020).

The findings of this study revealed a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression among middle adolescents, as indicated by a p-value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). This result is consistent with previous studies reporting a significant association between self-esteem and depression among students. The strength of the relationship was categorized as weak, with a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.287$. Although the correlation was relatively low, changes in self-esteem were still associated with changes in depression levels. The negative correlation indicates that higher self-esteem is associated with lower levels of depression, whereas lower self-esteem is associated with increased depressive symptoms (Tanoko, 2021).

Individuals experiencing disturbances in self-esteem may also experience emotional and cognitive dysfunction, including feelings of worthlessness, sadness, loss of interest, hopelessness, and social isolation, which can contribute to dysregulation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis (Pramesti,

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Doi: 10.56922/mhc.v5i2.3319

2019). Persistent dysregulation may lead to increased cortisol secretion and subsequent alterations in brain structure and function, particularly in areas involved in mood and emotional regulation, thereby exacerbating depressive symptoms. Furthermore, depression associated with low self-esteem may contribute to hypothalamic dysfunction, resulting in disturbances in sleep quality and eating patterns that negatively affect overall physical health, including immune system functioning (Lidya, Mandagi, & Pratiwi, 2021; Lutfiyah, 2021). This study has several limitations. The research was conducted in only one school, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. As each school possesses unique characteristics, including differences in student demographics and environmental factors, the results may not be directly applicable to other schools without considering these contextual differences (Coopersmith, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The majority of adolescents are 17 and 18 years old, and the majority are male. In terms of educational status, the majority have parents who are currently enrolled in school; in terms of employment status, the majority have parents who are employed; and in terms of income status, the majority have parents with an income of $\leq$ UMK. The majority of adolescents have moderate self-esteem and minimal levels of depression. There is a relationship between self-esteem and the incidence of depression in adolescents, with a low level of association.

REFERENCES

- Angelina, P., & Christanti, D. (2021). Gambaran self esteem remaja perempuan yang merasa imperfect akibat body shaming. *Gambaran self esteem remaja perempuan yang merasa imperfect akibat body shaming*, 9(2), 94-103.
- Ariyanti, V., & Purwoko, B. (2023). Faktor-Faktor yang memengaruhi self-esteem remaja: Literature review. *TERAPUTIK: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 6(3), 362-368.
- Bitsko, R. H., Claussen, A. H., Lichstein, J., Black, L. I., Jones, S. E., Danielson, M. L., & Ghandour, R. M. (2022). Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Supplement, February 25, 2022/Vol. 71/No. 2.
- Coopersmith, S. (2025). The antecedents of self-esteem. *Princeton*.
- Desi, D., Felita, A., & Kinasih, A. (2020). Gejala depresi pada remaja di sekolah menengah atas. *Care: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Kesehatan*, 8(1), 30.
- Dewi, G. R., Sebayang, S. K., Hapsah, M., & Purwoningrum, A. S. K. (2020). Gambaran Tingkat Depresi Pada Remaja Yang Aktif Berorganisasi Di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan X Banyuwangi. *Journal of Community Mental Health and Public Policy*, 3(1), 19-30.
- Febristi, A. (2020). Hubungan faktor individu dengan self esteem (harga diri) remaja panti asuhan di Kota Padang tahun 2019. *Menara Ilmu: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Kajian Ilmiah*, 14(1).
- Hidayat, D. R., Ramadhani, S., Nursyifa, T., & Afiyanti, Y. (2020). Harga Diri Mahasiswa Yang Terlambat Menyelesaikan Studi: Pride Of Students Who Delayed Their Study. *Perspektif Ilmu Pendidikan*, 34(2), 101-108.
- Lidya, L. I. N., Mandagi, A. M., & Pratiwi, X. I. (2021). Hubungan genetik dan psikologis dengan kejadian depresi pada remaja. *Journal of Community Mental Health and Public Policy*, 4(1), 26-36.
- Limupa, A., & Primanita, R. Y. (2022). Hubungan antara keterbukaan diri dan harga diri pada wanita yang mengalami KDRT di Sumatera Barat. *NUSANTARA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 9(4), 1311-1318.
- Lutfiyah, N. U. (2021). Studi kasus dinamika psikologis penderita depresi mayor dengan riwayat pengalaman korban kekerasan oleh orang tua. *Ristendik: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 6(2), 251-258.
- Maslim, R. (2019). Buku Saku Diagnosis gangguan jiwa rujukan ringkas dari PPDGJ-III, DSM-5, ICD-11. *Jakarta: PT. Nuh Jaya*.

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Doi: 10.56922/mhc.v5i2.3319

- Nareswari, P. J., & Gunadi, E. (2021). Depresi pada lansia: faktor resiko, diagnosis dan tatalaksana. *Jurnal Medika Utama*, 2(02 Januari), 562-570.
- Niman, S., & Surbakti, L. N. (2022). Terapi afirmasi positif pada klien dengan harga diri rendah: Studi kasus [Positive affirmation therapy for clients with low self-esteem: Case study]. *Jurnal Ilmu Keperawatan Jiwa*, 5, 484-492.
- Ningtyas, A. R., Puspitasari, I. M., & Sinuraya, R. K. (2018). Farmakoterapi Depresi dan Pengaruh Jenis Kelamin Terhadap Efikasi Antidepresan. *Farmaka*, 16(2).
- Osborn, T. L., Wasanga, C. M., & Ndeti, D. M. (2022). Transforming mental health for all. *bmj*, 377.
- Ospino, G. A. C., Colorado, Y. S., Arregocés, J. S., Gamarra-Vega, L. M., González, K. E., & Sotelo-Manjarres, A. P. (2025). Ideación suicida, depresión y autoestima en adolescentes escolares de Santa Marta. *Duazary: Revista Internacional de Ciencias de la Salud*, 12(1), 4.
- Pardede, J. A., Hutajulu, J., & Pasaribu, P. E. (2020). Self Esteem With Patient Depression. *Media Keperawatan Politeknik Kesehatan Makassar*, 11(01), 2087-2122.
- Pramesti, D. (2019). Relationship Between Keroncong Music Therapy With Depression of the Elderly Level At Panti Wredha Budhi Dharma Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Kesehatan "Samodra Ilmu*, 10(2).
- Pramesti, D. (2024). Harga Diri Pada Orang Dengan Hiv/Aids (Odha) Di Violet Community Yogyakarta (Studi Kasus). *KATA PENGANTAR*, 7(1), 167-174
- Rahmawati, L., & Elita, V. (2025). *Hubungan dukungan keluarga dengan tingkat depresi remaja di lembaga pemasyarakatan* (Doctoral dissertation, Riau University)..
- Tanoko, S. M. (2021). Benarkah ada hubungan antara self-esteem dengan depresi? Sebuah studi meta analisis. *Insight: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 23(1), 35-45.
- Tyas, D. M., Pertiwi, A., & Nisa, V. Z. (2023). Identifikasi jenis layanan bimbingan konseling dalam upaya memberikan informasi kesehatan mental pada peserta didik. *PSYCOMEDIA: Jurnal Psikologi*, 3(1), 23-34.
- Utama, B. S. P., Pramesti, D., & Mahfud, M. (2023). Hubungan Depresi dengan Student's Engagement pada Siswa di SMA Negeri 1 Minggir Sleman. *Jurnal Kesehatan Tambusai*, 4(4), 5277-5283.
- Yani, A. L., & Retnowuni, A. (2020). Millieu Therapy Metode Kreasi Seni Modifikasi Lingkungan Terhadap Tingkat Harga Diri Remaja. *ARTERI: Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan*, 1(4), 299-305.

Cindy Amalia Sari*, Despita Pramesti, Fatma Siti Fatimah, Mulyanti

Universitas Alma Ata Yogyakarta

Corresponding author: *E-mail: cindyamaliasari26@gmail.com

Doi: 10.56922/mhc.v5i2.3319