



The Influence of Self-Esteem on Narcissistic Behavior of High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the effect of self-esteem on narcissistic behavior. The research method used is a survey method with a quantitative approach. The sample of this study consisted of 216 respondents, who were grade XI students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, who were selected through a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected through observation and questionnaire distribution techniques. The data analysis technique used was simple linear regression. The results showed that the *F* count was 5.674 or sig 0.018 ($p < 0.05$), then self-esteem significantly positively influences narcissistic behavior. The research conclusion reveals that the influence of self-esteem is smaller than the influence of other external factors, which can be a clue that external factors have a greater role in influencing students than their sense of self-worth. This research contributes as a reference for schools, especially guidance and counseling (BK) teachers, in developing programs to strengthen healthy self-esteem in students. This aims to prevent excessive narcissistic behavior and encourage the development of a balanced personality.

KATA KUNCI

Self-Esteem;
Perilaku Narsistik;
Siswa SMA

ABSTRAK

Masih ditemukan masalah manajemen waktu peserta didik jadi latar belakang dari penelitian ini, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gambaran manajemen waktu pada peserta didik kelas VII di SMP Negeri 2 Semarang. Penelitian ini menerapkan pendekatan kuantitatif dan metodologi studi deskriptif. Jumlah sampel penelitian ini ialah 172 siswa kelas VII dengan teknik pengumpulan sampel menerapkan teknik simple random sampling. Hasil penelitian dan analisis data menunjukkan manajemen waktu peserta didik kelas VII di SMP Negeri 2 Semarang rata-rata berada di kategori sedang 72 peserta didik (42,20%), ada peserta didik yang mempunyai taraf manajemen waktu tinggi sejumlah 40 peserta didik (21,60%), dan 60 peserta didik (36,20%) dengan kategori rendah manajemen waktunya. Hasil penelitian ini dapat memberikan peran guru BK dalam mengembangkan perilaku yang baik pada peserta didik di sekolah agar proses perkembangan sosial peserta didik dapat berkembang dengan optimal, agar peserta didik memiliki keterampilan manajemen waktu yang baik.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is when individuals experience psychological development and transition from childhood to adulthood. This transitional period, often referred to as a critical phase, involves the process of identity formation. Students face challenges and changes during this critical stage as they start seeing the world from a new perspective compared to earlier phases in life and begin comparing their lives to those of others. One of the most important psychological aspects of Students development is self-esteem. As stated by Tafarodi & Swann (2001), self-esteem refers to an individual's evaluation of themselves based on their abilities and how others perceive them through personal capabilities, appearance, personality, and social identity. The formation and development of self-esteem play a crucial role in shaping Students' relationships with their environment and supporting their personal growth

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and quality of life. In line with Salsabila et al. (2022), self-esteem in Students can foster a positive outlook, enabling them to value themselves more. Students with high self-esteem exhibit good mental health, satisfactory academic performance, effective stress management, and minimal internal conflicts.

Internal and external factors, such as recognition from others, influence self-esteem (Wong et al., 2016). As they go through this key identity formation period, students seek recognition to reinforce a positive self-image. They start showing interest in their peers, striving to appear attractive and gain acknowledgment. As a result, Students may exhibit behaviors aimed at gaining attention, validation, and praise to build their confidence. However, this can lead to a lack of empathy for others, potentially resulting in narcissistic behavior (Maulana, 2023).

Raskin and Terry (1988) define narcissistic behavior as excessive self-admiration, often characterized by an overestimation of one's abilities, a desire to be the center of attention, difficulty accepting criticism, self-centeredness, lack of empathy, and exploitative tendencies. Students with narcissistic behavior may exhibit excessive feelings of self-importance and seek constant admiration as a form of self-actualization to validate their existence in the eyes of others. Narcissistic tendencies in Students can disrupt mental health, leaving them unable to experience peace, tranquility, and emotional security (Utomo & Pahlevi, 2024).

The concept of narcissism has evolved. From ancient myths like Narcissus to its integration with Neoplatonism and Christian ethics during the Middle Ages, narcissism has often been allegorically associated with pride and self-love. Kenneth Knoespel highlights that the story of Narcissus also serves as a narrative, prompting self-reflection and resolution through new perspectives (Renger, 2017). Narcissistic individuals often demonstrate a need to enhance their self-image by seeking positive reactions and validation from others (Back et al., 2013).

Research by Palupi (2023) reveals that one of the causes of narcissistic behavior in Students is low self-esteem, which drives them to seek external validation. While both narcissism and self-esteem involve positive self-perception, narcissistic individuals do not necessarily have high self-esteem. Narcissists see themselves as superior to others, while individuals with high self-esteem avoid comparing themselves to others. Similarly, Kusumawati et al. (2021) found that narcissistic behavior is characterized by beliefs of self-superiority, obsession with power fantasies, excessive need for recognition, entitlement, arrogance, envy, lack of empathy, and a sense of uniqueness and specialness.

A preliminary study conducted on students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya identified cases of students who believed they were more intelligent and superior in academic subjects they favored. These students paid close attention in class, performed exceptionally in exams, and aimed for the highest scores in subjects they enjoyed. However, they tended to disregard and underestimate other subjects they deemed unimportant. Such behavior reflects narcissistic tendencies, including feelings of superiority in certain areas and a need for recognition and attention from teachers and peers through continuous praise-seeking behaviors. At the same time, their disregard for other subjects and selective attitudes indicate entitlement and situational exploitation to strengthen their self-image. Narcissistic individuals often struggle in personal relationships due to a lack of empathy, envy, arrogance, and exploitative tendencies, believing others should serve their needs without reciprocation.

The purpose of the research is to know and analyze, among others, the general description of self-esteem in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, the general description of narcissistic behavior in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, and the effect of self-esteem with narcissistic behavior at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research method with a correlational design. Quantitative research involves data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of research findings. This type of research emphasizes quantification to collect, analyze, and present results that contribute academically. The method examined a specific population or sample to test predetermined hypotheses.

2.2 Research Object

The research was conducted at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, located at Jl. Cibungkul, Sukamaju Kaler, Tasikmalaya City. The research took place in 2024. The study population consisted of 472 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling, with 216 participants. A survey method was employed to collect the data.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected using observation, questionnaire surveys, and a review of relevant literature aligned with the research theme.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data from observations and questionnaires were processed and analyzed using descriptive analysis and simple linear regression techniques.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

1) Characteristics of Self-Esteem Variables in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya

Self-esteem, often referred to as self-worth, indicates the extent to which an individual values or respects themselves. It is a critical aspect of individual psychology that influences various life domains, including interpersonal relationships, decision-making processes, and the ability to handle life challenges. Self-esteem reflects how individuals perceive their abilities, self-worth, and self-acceptance. In this study, the focus was on Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya.

Table 1. Categorization of Self-Esteem Profiles

Formula	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X > M + SD$	68-87	High	47	21,76%
$M - SD \leq X \leq M + SD$	48-67	Medium	70	32,41%
$X \leq M - SD$	29-47	Low	99	45,83%
Total			216	100%

From the questionnaire data obtained from as many as 216 Students, a general description of the self-esteem variable in Students of SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya is obtained, which is in the high category with a score range between 68-87 as many as 47 Students for the percentage level of 21.76%, meaning that Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya who are in this category they have good self-confidence, feel valued, and have a positive view of themselves, they have strong self-confidence, the ability to face challenges and feel worthy to achieve goals and success. Furthermore, those in the moderate category with a score range between 48-67 were 70 Students with a percentage level of 32.41%, which means they tend to have balanced self-confidence. They may feel good about themselves but sometimes doubt themselves, especially in challenging situations. Their self-esteem is unstable and can be influenced by external factors or temporary feelings. Those in the low category, with a score range between 29 and 47, are 99 teenagers, with a percentage level of 45.83%, which means they often feel they are not good enough or not worthy. They may have a negative view of themselves, doubt their abilities, and easily feel failed or unappreciated. Low self-esteem is often associated with feelings of inferiority or anxiety about the judgment of others. These results highlight the importance of supporting students in improving their self-confidence and creating an environment that encourages positive development for all students..

2) General Description of Narcissistic Behavior Variables in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya

The results of the research on the characteristics of narcissistic behavior in general in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, the results of data obtained through the distribution of narcissistic behavior research instruments. In general, researchers describe narcissistic behavior in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya using a Guttman scale with three categories, namely, low, medium, and high. The following descriptive table is the basis for determining the general description of narcissistic behavior variables in Students of SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. The following research results regarding the general description of narcissistic behavior in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Narcissistic Behavior Profile Categorization

Formula	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X > M + SD$	28 - 32	High	137	63,43%
$M - SD \leq X \leq M + SD$	20 - 27	Medium	58	26,85%

Formula	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X \leq M - SD$	16 - 19	Low	21	9,72%
	Total		216	100%

Referring to the table above, the results of narcissistic behavior research in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya are in the high category with a score range of 28-32, as many as 137 Students with a percentage level of 63.43%; this means that more than half of the Students involved show a high level of racism. The high percentage in this category could indicate that in a school environment, such as SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, many teenagers have behaviors or attitudes that tend to be more self-focused, which could be influenced by social factors, relationships, or parenting. Then, for the moderate category with a score range of 20-27, as many as 58 Students with a percentage level of 26.85%, meaning that most Students show a moderate level of narcissism. Teenagers in this category show some narcissistic characteristics but are not too dominant. They still have a sense of empathy and are better able to adjust to their social environment, even though they still show some characteristics of wanting to be appreciated or get attention. This indicates that although most Students show high levels of narcissism, there is still a group that is at a moderate level, which tends to be more balanced in their behavior.

Finally, for those in the low category with a score range between 16-19, as many as 21 Students, the percentage level is 9.7%, although the number is relatively small. This result shows that there is a small proportion of Students who have low narcissistic behavior. They tend to be less likely to need attention or recognition from others. They may care more about authentic social relationships and have more empathy towards others. With this in mind, at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, most Students tend to have higher or moderate narcissistic tendencies, while the group that shows low narcissistic is very few.

Overall, it illustrates that narcissistic behavior among Students of SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya tends to be high, which may require further attention in terms of self-image management and character education to build a better social balance.

3) Influence of Self-Esteem with Narcissistic Behavior in Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya

a) Correlation Test

The correlation test was conducted to determine the level of closeness of each research variable. The following are the results of the correlation test using Pearson correlation.

Table 3. Correlation Test of Self-Esteem Variables with Narcissistic Behavior

		Self-Esteem	Perilaku Narsistik
<i>Self-Esteem</i>	Pearson Correlation	1	-1,61
	Sig		,018
	N	216	216
Narcissistic Behavior	Pearson Correlation	-1,61	1
	Sig	,018	
	N	216	216

The correlation test with product moment correlation was developed by Pearson, known as Pearson correlation, to determine the single correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The rule used in this study is if the significance value is <0.05. There is a significant correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variable. Still, if the significance value is ≥0.05, there is no significant correlation between the dependent and independent variables.

The table above shows the correlation test results between self-esteem and narcissistic behavior; the correlation coefficient value is -0.161, with a significance value of 0.037 (p <0.05). From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the negative correlation coefficient indicates that the relationship between self-esteem variables and narcissistic behavior is not unidirectional, which means that the higher the self-esteem, the lower the narcissistic behavior and vice versa, the lower the self-esteem, the higher the narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya.

b) Regression Test

Referring to the results of the simple linear regression test between self-esteem and narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya using SPSS V.20 software produces the values listed in the following table.

Table 4. Test Results of the Effect of Self-Esteem on Narcissistic Behavior

Model	R	R Square
1	.161 ^a	,026

Referring to the data above, the results of the R-value obtained in statistical analysis illustrate the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables studied. In this case, the R-value is 0.161 or equivalent to 16.1%, which shows that self-esteem affects narcissistic behavior by 16.1% and other variables influence the rest. These findings illustrate that self-esteem has a significant role in influencing narcissistic behavior. Therefore, to get a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. Overall, despite the detected influence, other factors beyond self-esteem also play an important role in shaping narcissistic behavior in Students. The results of this analysis also provide important insights for parents as well as educators to understand better how self-esteem can influence narcissistic behavior.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Test Results of Self-Esteem on Narcissistic Behavior

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	12,741	1,094		11,646	,000
Self-Esteem	-,044	,018	-,161	-2,382	,018

Referring to the table above, the results of the simple linear regression test of self-esteem on narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya show that the Constant value is 28.741 while the regression coefficient value is -0.044. It can be concluded that the high and low level of narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya is determined by self-esteem.

c) Hypothesis Test

The F test is used to see how much influence variable X has on variable Y simultaneously. The F test was conducted with SPSS version 20, whose results were determined through the simple linear regression test output table. The basis for the decision is to pay attention to the sig value and then compare the F count and sig <0.05. If the sig value is <0.05, there is an influence between the independent and dependent variables, and vice versa. As listed in the following table.

Table 6. Simultaneous Hypothesis Test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	12,741	1,094		11,646	,000
Self-Esteem	-,044	,018	-,161	-2,382	,018

Referring to the table above, the F-statistic value obtained is 5.674 with a significance value of 0.018, indicating that the hypothesis is accepted. This F-statistic result demonstrates that the model testing the relationship between self-esteem (X) and narcissistic behavior (Y) can explain variations in the data effectively. In this context, it signifies that self-esteem (X) significantly influences narcissistic behavior (Y). Moreover, the obtained significance value of 0.018, which is less than 0.05, shows that the relationship between self-esteem (X) and narcissistic behavior (Y) is not coincidental. This means there is a significant and real influence of self-esteem (X) on narcissistic behavior (Y).

The hypothesis test results conclude that the obtained significance value of 0.018, less than 0.05, leads to rejecting H₀ and accepting H_a. Thus, the self-esteem variable significantly influences narcissistic behavior among 11th-grade Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya.

3.2. Discussion

Referring to the research findings on the influence of self-esteem on narcissistic behavior among Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya, it is evident that 11th-grade students show a correlation test result of 0.161 between self-esteem and narcissistic behavior. This value indicates a low correlation, meaning that the higher the self-esteem level of the students, the higher their level of narcissistic behavior. According to Pearson's correlation table, the correlation becomes stronger if the test value approaches 1.

The results of a simple linear regression test between self-esteem and narcissistic behavior among 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya showed an R Square value of 0.026, equivalent to 2.6%. This indicates that self-esteem contributes 2.6% to narcissistic behavior among Students, with the remaining influence attributed to other variables outside this study. The regression coefficient for the self-esteem variable is -0.044 with a negative sign, suggesting that if self-esteem increases by one unit, assuming other independent variables remain constant, narcissistic behavior increases by 0.044. This implies that the degree of narcissistic behavior among Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya is determined by self-esteem. Additionally, the hypothesis test results align with the conclusion that self-esteem significantly affects narcissistic behavior, confirming the acceptance of H_a and rejection of H_0 .

Based on empirical data, 11th-grade Students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya generally have low self-esteem and high narcissistic behavior. Students with low self-esteem often experience discomfort, such as insecurity about their physical appearance or inability to build healthy relationships. They tend to exhibit narcissistic behavior as a way to seek comfort and recognition from others. Students with high narcissistic tendencies often belong to the group with negative self-esteem indicators. Negative indicators include belittling others through mockery, exaggerated body gestures, inappropriate physical contact, allowing mistakes, boasting achievements, self-deprecation, and speaking harshly (Santrock, 2007).

Individuals with low self-esteem are prone to feelings of worthlessness and incompetence (Huyse-Gaytandjieva et al., 2015). They also tend to adopt avoidant behaviors as a coping mechanism to manage the negative emotions arising from such beliefs. These unhealthy strategies may lead to stress and symptoms of depression.

One of the causes of narcissistic behavior is self-esteem. Individuals with low and unstable self-esteem tend to rely heavily on social interactions, making them vulnerable to criticism (Sedikides et al., 2004). Thomas and Sedikides (2016) explain that while both narcissism and self-esteem involve a positive self-view, many narcissistic individuals do not possess high self-esteem. Narcissists view themselves as superior to others, whereas individuals with high self-esteem avoid comparing themselves as better than others. Narcissistic individuals often experience a decline in self-esteem when they encounter negative achievements.

Individuals with low self-esteem often seek validation as a way to affirm their self-worth, which becomes the basis of their narcissistic behavior (Marissen et al., 2016). They frequently crave praise and recognition from others, leading to heightened narcissistic tendencies. Narcissistic individuals are highly dependent on acknowledgment and admiration from others, often showcasing their achievements or traits to enhance their self-esteem. Conversely, individuals with high self-esteem do not exhibit narcissistic behavior as they do not rely on external praise or need to showcase their abilities. They understand their worth without depending on others.

Research by Xiaofeng Xu et al. (2020) shows that self-esteem and narcissistic behavior are closely related. Students with high levels of narcissism and low self-esteem tend to experience mental health issues. Furthermore, the study reveals that narcissism only positively impacts psychological health when accompanied by high self-esteem. Narcissistic behavior is characterized by a sense of superiority, excessive attitudes, and a tendency to seek constant attention, acknowledgment, and admiration from others to maintain a positive self-view. This behavior reflects the interaction between intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of personality. Unlike narcissistic individuals, those with high self-esteem exhibit a positive yet realistic self-view. Despite feeling intrinsically valuable, they do not perceive themselves as superior to others. They value their intrinsic worth without relying on external validation to maintain their self-view.

4. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Guidance and counseling in its services to help and facilitate Students in increasing self-esteem; with healthy self-esteem, Students can feel more confident and think positively, reduce the need to seek excessive validation, and so that Students focus more on building healthy and respectful relationships with others to avoid narcissistic behavior. The service that can be done is to carry out group counseling with a cognitive behavior therapy approach.

According to Pratiwi et al. (2024), group counseling services are one of the guidance and counseling services that can be implemented anywhere to discuss certain problems in a group atmosphere and to assist students in making decisions through group dynamics. In the implementation of group counseling, each group member reveals a problem he is experiencing so that the topics discussed cannot be predicted or planned by the group leader. Therefore, the counselor must have broad insight to deal with various problems each group member will convey.

5. CONCLUSIONS

There is a relationship between self-esteem and narcissistic behavior among 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. The implication of counseling services in improving self-esteem to prevent narcissistic behavior by implementing group counseling Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) approach with cognitive restructuring techniques.

The results showed that the influence of self-esteem was smaller than the influence of other external factors, which could be a clue that external factors have a greater role in influencing students than their sense of self-worth. We should identify external factors that play a role, increase the role of self-esteem in self-development, strengthen social and environmental support, deal with negative influences and external factors, as well as a collaborative approach between schools, families, and the surrounding environment, and Suggestions for future researchers are to conduct a deeper study of self-esteem on narcissistic behavior studied with different units of analysis, and conduct analysis using or adding other variables outside this study.

Recommendation. About low self-esteem in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya should be approached by increasing self-awareness, education, and social skills, support from teachers and parents, increasing peers, and a holistic approach. It is expected that the self-esteem of 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya can increase to cope better with the challenges and develop into more confident individuals. Related narcissistic behavior in 11th-grade students at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya can be seen in terms of aspects that are low from the average value of the entitlement aspect; it should be by increasing healthy self-confidence, empathetic education, building the value of hard work and proper appreciation, empowerment in various activities and psychological counseling and assistance. It is hoped that Students can better understand the value of effort, hard work, and fair rewards and reduce narcissistic behavior and a low sense of entitlement, which ultimately helps them to develop into emotionally and socially healthier individuals.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors have equally contributed to the article and are responsible for the data presented in this study.

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