Dimensions of Self-Concept in Adolescents: An In-depth Analysis Among Junior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the intricate nature of self-concept, a pivotal element in human behavior and identity formation, encompassing beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions shaping individuals' understanding of themselves and their environment across physical, psychological, and social dimensions, influencing behavior and self-esteem. Focusing on junior high school students aged 13-18 in Bangka Belitung, the study employs a quantitative descriptive approach with 126 participants, employing Rahmat's theory (2013) to gauge self-concept facets. Outcomes reveal that 34% of students perceive their self-concept as moderate, while 4% hold positive views and 32% exhibit above-average self-concepts. Notably, gender-based disparities accentuate the need for tailored interventions. Identification of areas needing improvement via validity testing led to proposed classical guidance topics aimed at augmenting self-concept, including body care, confidence-building, and social interaction. Implications stress the significance of customized interventions, gender-aware strategies, and nurturing positive self-concept for comprehensive student growth, in alignment with educational experts' viewpoints, advocating self-awareness, constructive perspectives, and individualized assistance. These insights advocate holistic approaches to empower students on their path to self-acceptance, personal development, and holistic growth, echoing broader educational objectives and policies, reaffirming the pivotal role of classical guidance in molding students' self-concept.

Keywords: self-concept; identity formation; adolescents; junior high school students; gender disparities

INTRODUCTION

Self-concept is fundamental to understanding human behavior and identity. Every individual has a self-concept, a complex structure that constitutes their self-beliefs, perceptions, and evaluations. This framework helps an individual understand themselves better and exert influence over others. Stuart & Sundeen (2019) postulate that self-concept encapsulates thoughts, beliefs, and convictions that aid individuals in self-awareness. This perception goes beyond mere self-identification; it's the lens through which an individual observes themselves and forms their worldview. Crocker and Wolfe, cited in Liauwrencia and Putra (2014), assert that self-concept is an all-encompassing view derived from myriad observations. This idea is supported by Brooks, as quoted in Widodo (2016), who opines that self-concept is the culmination of one's perceptions of oneself, spanning physical, social, and psychological dimensions rooted in experiential learnings. Soekanto (2019) builds on this foundation, introducing the aspect of emotions. He describes self-concept as a blend of attitudes, feelings, and perceptions, which guide an individual's understanding of both themselves and their life at large. Furthermore, Ummay (2023) and Susanto et al. (2020) share the consensus that self-concept is essentially one's cognizance about themselves. Interestingly, self-concepts are not uniform; they can be either positive or negative. Seo, Shen, & Benner (2019) describe individuals with a positive self-concept as those characterized by confidence in their problem-

solving abilities, seeing themselves on par with peers, gracefully accepting compliments, and recognizing that everyone holds emotions that might not align with societal expectations while continually striving for personal growth. Conversely, those with a negative self-concept tend to be criticism-sensitive, crave validation, possess hypercritical attitudes, harbor feelings of being disliked, and generally exhibit a pessimistic outlook on life.

The way we perceive and evaluate ourselves is fundamentally tied to our self-concept. A positive self-concept not only makes us understand ourselves better but also fosters happiness and contentment due to self-acceptance. This view encompasses self-worth and how others perceive us. Yuliana and Rohman (2018) advocate that individuals equipped with a healthy self-concept are better positioned to navigate social landscapes. Brooks and Emmart, in their research cited by Hidayat & Bashori (2016), outline the traits of individuals with a positive self-concept, which include problem-solving skills, equanimity with others, unashamed acceptance of compliments, and a consistent drive for growth and development. Adding to this discourse, Apriani, Rahman, Hamdani (2018) correlate a positive self-concept with reduced proclivity for procrastination. Setiadi (2018) postulates that achieving self-maturity is contingent upon cultivating a robust self-concept. Mutmainah (2023) opines that individuals with a positive self-concept are adept at understanding and valuing themselves. Such individuals often achieve success and accolades. In stark contrast, those with a negative self-concept view themselves as ineffectual, incompetent, failures, and often feel ostracized, leading to diminished life appeal. This perspective is echoed by Umany (2023), who found in her research that many students felt inferior to their peers, lacked competitiveness, suffered from low self-esteem, and considered themselves deficient, predominantly due to a diminished self-concept.

Given its importance, cultivating a robust self-concept becomes crucial, especially for junior high school students transitioning into adolescence, aged between 13-18 years. This period, marked by identity crises, sees them embarking on journeys of self-exploration, deciphering their interests, and honing their talents. These students, facing such pivotal developmental tasks, benefit immensely from a fortified self-concept. Considering the aforementioned insights, our research aims to discern the self-concept of junior high school students in Bangka Belitung across physical, psychological, and social dimensions. Our objectives are twofold. First, to comprehend the prevailing self-concept among these students. And second, to identify elements of self-concept that require optimization, laying the foundation for proposing personal and social guidance topics.

METHOD
Research Approach

The research underpinning this study adopts a quantitative descriptive methodology. This approach is rooted in the need to comprehensively understand and describe phenomena using numerical data (Creswell, 2014). Such a method is ideal for situations where data can be quantified and statistically analyzed, thereby producing results that can be generalized to a wider population (Bryman, 2015).

Participants

The study comprises 126 junior high school students from Bangka Belitung. The sampling size was determined keeping in mind both the diversity of the population and the feasibility of data collection. As suggested by Saunders et al. (2012), a sample size of this magnitude can produce a good representation of the broader demographic.

Data Collection Instrument

The primary tool for data collection was a scale structured around Rahmat's theory (2013). This theory delves deep into self-concept and elaborates on its three crucial dimensions: physiological, psychological, and social. According to Rahmat (2013), understanding these dimensions is paramount to comprehending the overarching notion of self-concept. The scale employed was a Likert scale, which is commonly used in behavioral studies to measure attitudes and perceptions (Likert, 1932). Participants were provided with a range of options, ranked from 1 to 5, for each statement, allowing them to express the degree to which they agree or disagree.

Scale Items

Initially, the scale incorporated 68 items crafted to gauge participants' self-concept. These items were meticulously crafted to ensure content validity, drawing inspiration from the dimensions proposed by Rahmat (2013). The items underwent rigorous scrutiny for both validity and reliability.

Validity

Validity ensures that the tool measures what it intends to (Field, 2013). Out of the 68 items, 9 were excluded post the validity test, ensuring that the remaining items were pertinent and truly reflective of the dimensions in Rahmat's theory. This attrition of items is not uncommon, as instruments often undergo iterative refinement to optimize validity (DeVellis, 2016).

Reliability

The reliability of an instrument denotes its consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.946 was achieved, suggesting excellent reliability (George & Mallery, 2003). Such a high value underscores the consistency of the scale items in measuring students' self-concept.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Participant Demographics

The research encompassed all students in Bangka Belitung, resulting in a sample size of 126 students. A gender-wise distribution of the respondents revealed that the sample consisted of 48 male and 78 female students.

Table 1. Characteristics of the respondents based on gender

Gender	Count
Male	48
Female	78
Total	126

Overview of Self-Concept

Rahmat (2013) elucidates that the self-concept has three primary facets: physiological, psychological, and social. The physiological facet deals with personal assessments of physical attributes such as the body, attire, and possessions. The psychological dimension encompasses thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. Meanwhile, the social component delves into an individual's role in their social circles and their perception of this role.
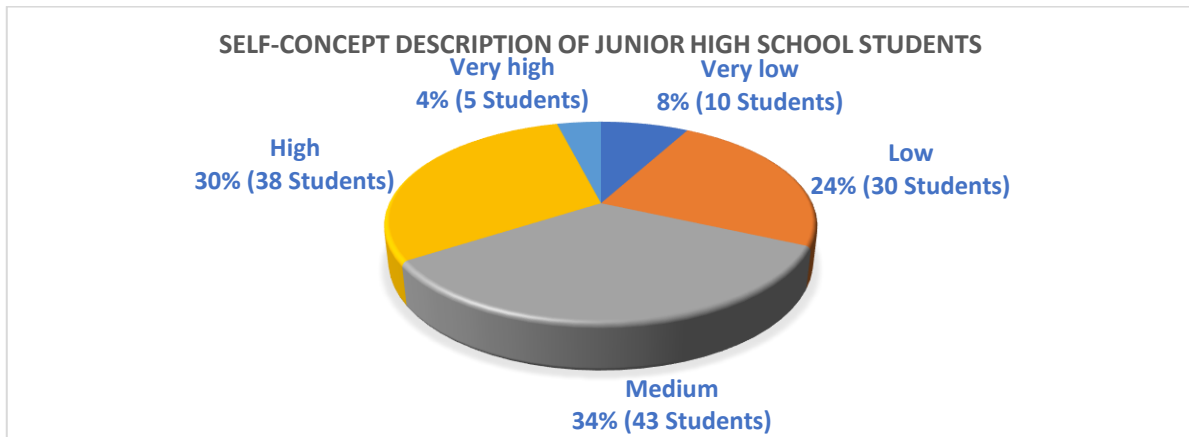

Figure 1. Overview of Self-Concept among students.

From the chart, it's evident that a significant proportion of the students, precisely 34%, perceive their self-concept as moderate. On the other hand, 4% of the students exhibit a high self-concept. Additionally, 30% showcase an above-average self-concept, while 24% and 8% of the students have low and very low self-concepts, respectively. These statistics suggest that a majority of these students have a neutral to moderately positive self-perception, spanning physical, psychological, and social dimensions.
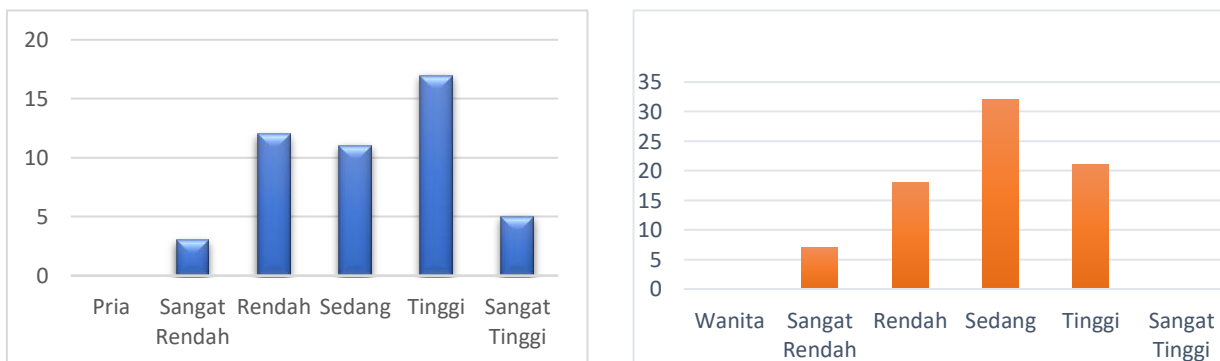

Figure 2. Gender-Based Overview of Self-Concept among SMP Students

The chart displays stark differences in self-concept based on gender. Specifically, while five male students possess an exceedingly high self-concept, none of the female students fall into this category. Disparities between male and female students persist across other self-concept categories as well. Damarhadi et al. (2020) articulate that self-concept is a reflection of an individual's self-assessment. This encapsulates feelings, attitudes, and perceptions, both conscious and subconscious. A positive self-concept is closely tied to self-awareness. This implies having a realistic outlook, thinking positively, accepting others, and setting achievable goals (Thanoesya, R., Syahniar, S., & Ifdil, I, 2016). Conversely, a negative self-concept stems from an absence of self-awareness, evaluations, and optimistic anticipations, leading to unrealistic and pessimistic attitudes.

Questionnaire Item Suggestions

The objective behind scoring each item was to garner a detailed understanding of students' self-concept and subsequently aid them in enhancing it. A meticulous analysis revealed that 9 items were in the extremely low category. To ensure holistic development, students need support in these areas. Khotimah (2023) emphasized that classical guidance aims to help overcome challenges to attain success and desired outcomes. Echoing this sentiment, Ramti (2023) described classical guidance as a service that aids students in fully realizing their potential.

Table 2. Proposed Topics for Classical Guidance

Aspect	Item	Theme	Objective	Guidance Field	Method
Physiological	I don't maintain my body hygiene	Self and Body Care	Empower students to look after themselves	Personal	Q&A, Content
Psychological	I fear expressing opinions, I am hesitant trying new things, I change my mind frequently, I act without thinking	Confidence (Public Speaking), Succeed with Thought	Enable students to confidently voice opinions and deliberate before acting	Personal & Social	Q&A, Content
Social	I can't do everything on my own, I prefer working solo, I'm indifferent to others' actions, I try to please others, I find it hard to socialize	Care and Sharing	Instill in students a sense of caring and sharing	Personal & Social	Q&A, Content

The current research offered invaluable insights into the self-concept of students from Bangka Belitung. It underscores the significance of classical guidance in nurturing a balanced self-concept, paving the way for future endeavors aiming at holistic student development.

Implications

The implications of this research hold significant value for educational practitioners, policymakers, and researchers alike. The identification of gender-based differences in self-concept emphasizes the need for targeted interventions that acknowledge and cater to the distinct needs and challenges faced by male and female students. This understanding aligns with the sentiments of Thanoesya, Syahniar, and Ifdil (2016), who assert that tailoring educational strategies based on gender differences can lead to more effective outcomes. The prevalence of a moderate to above-average self-concept among the students provides a promising foundation for further enhancing their self-perception. This resonates with the ideas of Khotimah (2023), who underscores the role of self-awareness and positive self-concept in nurturing individuals' overall growth and development. As highlighted by Damarhadi et al. (2020), a positive self-concept is pivotal for individuals' ability to overcome challenges and attain their goals.

The identification of specific areas falling within the extremely low self-concept category serves as a clarion call for immediate intervention. Similar sentiments are echoed by Ramti (2023) in emphasizing the significance of tailored guidance to address areas of concern among students. These insights underscore the need for personalized support mechanisms, resonating with the sentiments of several researchers (Khotimah, 2023; Ramti, 2023; Thanoesya et al., 2016), who emphasize the importance of addressing students' individual needs. The proposed topics for classical guidance, spanning areas such as self-care, confidence-building, and social interaction, align well with the recommendations of educational experts such as Ramti (2023) and Khotimah (2023). By offering actionable strategies, these topics provide educators with concrete tools to empower students in their journey towards holistic development. As Thanoesya et al. (2016) suggest, guidance interventions that foster positive self-concept contribute significantly to students' personal and social growth.

The emphasis on self-awareness and positive perception, central to this study, aligns harmoniously with the vision of nurturing well-rounded individuals as advocated by Damarhadi et al. (2020). This research reinforces the notion that instilling self-awareness, cultivating a positive outlook, and promoting self-acceptance can profoundly impact students' lives, as suggested by Thanoesya et al. (2016). The insights from this research resonate with the perspectives of scholars and experts in the field of education and psychology. The implications extend beyond academia, influencing pedagogical approaches and policies. By recognizing the potent role of classical guidance in shaping self-concept, educational stakeholders are better equipped to pave the way for comprehensive student growth. This encompasses personal, social, and academic spheres, enabling students to navigate life's intricacies with confidence, positivity, and a deep understanding of their own potential.

CONCLUSION

This study delves into the self-concept of students in Bangka Belitung, examining perceptions across various dimensions. The research involves 126 students, balanced in gender representation, enhancing findings' credibility. Rahmat's framework highlights self-concept's physiological, psychological, and social aspects. Graphical representation illustrates students'

self-concept ratings, with a prevalent neutral to moderately positive self-perception. Gender-based disparities are evident, emphasizing nuanced self-concept development. Self-concept mirrors self-assessment, influencing positivity or negativity. Meticulous scoring reveals areas for intervention and classical guidance's role in holistic development. The study's implications stress tailored interventions, advocating for classical guidance in personal, social, and psychological domains. Self-awareness and positive self-perception are crucial, resonating beyond academics to inform policies and pedagogy. By embracing classical guidance, stakeholders empower students to navigate life confidently, fostering holistic growth.

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