



The Role of Self-Esteem in Mediating Social Anxiety on Body Shaming Victims

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to (1) empirically test the influence of body shaming with social anxiety, (2) empirically test the influence of body shaming with social anxiety mediated by self-esteem. The subjects in this study were 141 undergraduate students of the Department of Aquaculture where the data collection method was carried out by chance. The research data was collected using three scales, (1) the social anxiety scale, (2) the body shaming scale, and (3) the self-esteem scale. The collected data is analyzed using regression and path analysis. The results showed that (1) body shaming affects social anxiety and (2) self-esteem mediates the influence of body shaming on social anxiety. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended to develop self-esteem because it is proven to be able to mediate the emergence of social anxiety in victims of body shaming.

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BACKGROUND

Social anxiety is a disorder that according to DSM 5 is characterized by the emergence of extraordinary anxiety or fear in certain social situations because of the fear of being humiliated or ridiculed (Mayoclinic, 2021). Social anxiety or social phobia is a common symptom in society, with a lifetime prevalence in 2-5% of the adult population. This arises when the individual must interact with other people as needed. Social anxiety is the third most common mental disorder in the world (Thomas L, 2018). Furthermore, epidemiological studies in the United States reported that about 7% of the population is affected by social anxiety at any time, and the risk that this disorder is present for life is about 13%. Social anxiety levels in South America are like those in the United States, while Korea, China, and Japan show very low levels of 0.6%, 0.2%, and 0.8%, respectively. Meanwhile, high levels of social anxiety were found in Russia (Thomas L, 2018). This epidemiology of social anxiety also occurs a lot in Indonesia, as stated by (Engel, 2014) that of the entire population in Indonesia, the prevalence of individuals experiencing social anxiety reaches up to 15.8%.

In the initial study with respondents who experienced social anxiety, respondents felt that they had no friends on campus, and felt that there were no good people on campus. After conducting follow-up interviews, it was found that the respondents experienced a variety of traumas in their lives, such as experiencing body shaming by their friends on campus.

In contrast to everyday nervousness, social anxiety disorder includes fear, anxiety and avoidance that interferes with daily routines, work, school, or other activities. Social anxiety disorder usually begins in the early to mid-teens, although it can sometimes start in younger children or in adults (Mayoclinic, 2021). The period of onset of social anxiety disorder generally

appears in late childhood and adolescence. Although it can develop at any age, it rarely appears for the first time after age 25. The incidence rate in pre-adolescents (at about age 10) is about 3.5%, and this rate increases to 14% in adolescents. Childhood social anxiety if left untreated can continue into adulthood. Social anxiety is a lifelong disorder, although it may decrease with age (Thomas L, 2018). Although the gender distribution is the same during pre-adolescence, but at a later stage from adolescence to adulthood, more women than men experience this social anxiety disorder.

Body shaming is an act of assessing the victim's body by the perpetrator where the perpetrator considers that the victim's body is not perfect and does not comply with the "standard" ideal body recognized by the community. (Lestari, 2020; Sugiati, 2019). It is unfortunate that body shaming is very common in society so that people perceive it as a normal and natural thing to do. In fact, in some cases, victims of body shaming are considered "baper" or considered sensitive if they feel offended when a perpetrator gives a negative assessment of their body. This form of body shaming treatment includes insults, ridicule, satire and made as a laughing stock by the perpetrators (Sugiati, 2019). Based on the description above, it can be concluded that body shaming can lead to the emergence of social anxiety disorder in individual victims of body shaming.

Several previous researchers have succeeded in knowing that the high and low of social anxiety is closely related to the high and low self-esteem. According to (Nguyen et al., 2019) that decreased self-esteem can increase anxiety. The same thing was conveyed by (Berber elik & Odaci, 2020; Chen & Qin, 2020), where the higher self-esteem can reduce the level of social anxiety in adolescents. In interviews during the initial research, respondents who experienced body shaming also showed a

tendency to have low self-esteem and showed a tendency to experience social anxiety about their environment and only feel comfortable with certain people. This is supported by the results of research from (Liskiasiwi & Astuti, 2020) who found a negative relationship between self-esteem with social anxiety. Self-esteem also shows a negative relationship with anxiety (Nguyen et al., 2019) and body shaming (Sustainable, 2020).

This research is considered important because the research that has been done has explored body shaming independently or its relationship to social anxiety and self-esteem separately, but research that combines several of these factors has never been done. For this reason, this research is deemed necessary to examine the good relationship between body shaming to social anxiety, as well as the effect of self-esteem as an intervening variable that plays a role between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Based on the background described above, this research aims to empirically test the relationship between body shaming and social anxiety and empirically test the relationship between body shaming and social anxiety mediated by self-esteem

RESEARCH METHODS

Types of research

This study uses a quantitative approach, by distributing questionnaires via google form to students as the research population.

Research Population and Sample

Research Population

In this study, the subjects studied were the population of undergraduate students at the Department of Aquaculture, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, Diponegoro University.

Table 1. Total research population

No.	Batch	Total
1	2017	110
2	2018	108
3	2019	121
4	2020	139
	Total	478

The total population is around 478 students (Table 1) from four batches (2017-2020).

Research Sample

The sample size to be used follows the sample size table for categorical and continuous data from (Adam, 2020). According to Adam, for a population of 400, the sample required is 128 students to achieve a 90% confidence level.

In this study, the sample was taken using the accidental sampling technique. This was done because at the time of data

collection the pandemic condition increased sharply and all teaching and learning activities were carried out online, so that other data collection methods became more difficult to do. The way to do this is by distributing the google form link to the population of this study through the head of the level of each generation.

Method of collecting data

The scale used in this study is the body shaming scale (12 items), self-esteem scale (18 items) and social anxiety scale (18 items)

which have been validated and tested for reliability (Table 2).

Table 2. Reliability test results

No.	Variable	Cronbach's alpha
1	Social anxiety	0.924
2	body shaming	0.922
3	Self-esteem	0.971

The table above shows that all the scales used in this study have been declared reliable based on the value of the reliability test results above 0.9.

Data analysis technique

This study uses several analyzes to test the hypothesis in this study. The analysis used is in accordance with (Pallant, 2005) are regression and path analysis.

RESEARCH RESULT

Assumption Test

The Kolmogorov normality test results obtained the Asymp value. Sig of $0.200 > 0.05$ so it can be concluded that the data has met the assumption of normal distribution.

Based on the scatter plot image, the distribution of the data distribution is below and above zero without forming a certain pattern so that it can be concluded that the

data is free from heteroscedasticity symptoms.

Based on the multicollinearity test, the tolerance value is $0.651 > 0.10$ and $VIF 1.536 < 10.00$ for X, so it can be concluded that the Body Shaming variable meets the assumption of being symptom-free of multicollinearity.

The results of the multicollinearity test obtained a Tolerance value of $0.789 > 0.10$ and a $VIF 1.267 < 10.00$ for Z so that it can be concluded that the Social Anxiety variable fulfills the assumption of being symptom-free of multicollinearity.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1: Presumably body shaming effect on social anxiety.

The first hypothesis assumes that there is a positive relationship between body shaming variables and social anxiety. The higher the body shaming, the higher the social anxiety.

Table 3. Partial t-test on social anxiety

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.794	8.943		1.878	.063
	Body Shaming	.465	.081	.497	5.745	.000
	Self Esteem	.142	.099	.141	1.442	.152

Table 4. Partial t-test on self-esteem

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	78.343	3,891		20.133	.000
	Body Shaming	-171	.069	-.184	-2.490	.014

Based on the t-test table for social anxiety (Table 3), the value of Sig. for X1 of $0.000 < 0.05$ with a beta coefficient of 0.497 so that H1 is accepted, which means that there is a positive relationship between body shaming variables and social anxiety.

Hypothesis 2: Self-esteem mediates body shaming effect on social anxiety.

The second hypothesis suggests that there is a negative relationship between body shaming and self-esteem and a positive relationship with social anxiety. The taller the body shaming, the lower the self-esteem and the higher the social anxiety.

Based on the partial t test table on self-esteem (Table 4), the Sig. for body shaming of $0.014 < 0.05$ with a beta coefficient of -0.184 which means that there is a negative relationship between body shaming variables with self-esteem.

Based on the partial t test table for social anxiety (Table 3), the Sig value is obtained. for body shaming of $0.000 < 0.05$ with a beta coefficient of 0.497, which means that there is a positive relationship between body shaming variables and social anxiety. So that Hypothesis 2 is accepted and supports the initial hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

Influence body shaming to social anxiety

The first hypothesis of this study suggests that there is a positive influence between body shaming with social anxiety, which means that the higher body shaming then the higher social anxiety. Based on the results of the study, it was found that there was a positive influence between body shaming to social anxiety, thus hypothesis 1 can be accepted. This is in accordance with research from (Mason & Lewis, 2016) which states that body shaming can affect the formation social anxiety. Individuals who experience body shaming Moreover, what is done by the immediate environment

continuously can lead to feelings of inferiority and over time have a fear of meeting other people for fear of being criticized or ridiculed again. This is in accordance with the opinion of (Delgado et al., 2019; La Greca & Lopez, 1998) that the characteristics of individuals who experience social anxiety can experience:

- a. Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE) is the fear of negative judgments from other people, for example the presence of fear or concern such as "I'm afraid that other people don't like me".
- b. Social Avoidance and Distress in New Situations (SAD-N) which is avoiding new social situations, including feelings of stress when facing or meeting new people. For example, "I feel nervous when I have to face someone I just met".
- c. Social Avoidance and Distress-General (SAD-G) namely avoiding long-standing social situations, for example "I find it difficult to invite other people to do activities with me".

Social anxiety as a personality disorder that is common in society can affect and interfere with the daily life of an individual. Disturbance social anxiety This can arise for several reasons and one of them is due to the influence of the social environment (Al-Sharbaty et al., 2012; MayoClinic, 2021). Negative social and cultural environment such as body shaming (Lestari, 2020; Sugiyati, 2019) can trigger the emergence social anxiety. According to Lestari (2020) body shaming has an influence on the emergence of social anxiety and makes the individual withdraw from his social environment. Besides Bell (Leigh, 2015), also revealed that body shaming has a very important role in shaping social anxiety because individuals are afraid of being judged by social society.

The results of interviews in the initial research also showed that respondents who experienced body shaming show a tendency to have low self-esteem and showing symptoms of social anxiety.

Sugiati (Sugiati, 2019) also explained in his research that respondents told about body shaming what they experience is done by the closest people such as friends and even by their own parents. This then causes respondents to feel inferior and close themselves in communicating with certain people. This is supported by the opinion (Misnani, 2016) who conducted research on social anxiety in victims of bullying and its effect on individual assertiveness. It was found like this study, that victims of bullying showed high levels of social anxiety and affected their level of assertiveness. This is dangerous if experienced in the long term because low social anxiety will also reduce the individual's self-image (Widiyani et al., 2021).

Apart from being treated body shaming by other people, body shaming can also be done by yourself. Today the effects of social media are so great that individuals set a standard of beauty or appropriateness according to what is on social media. This can result in the occurrence of body shaming against yourself. As mentioned by (Vargas, 2019) that one indication of body shaming action is to criticize one's own appearance and compare it with the appearance of others who think they are better than himself. Of course this can lower the level self-esteem as stated by (Sustainable, 2020), that body shaming can give various kinds of negative psychological effects such as anxiety, fear, self-esteem low, stress and so on. Thus, the results of this study support past studies that the higher the body shaming then higher social anxiety experienced by the individual.

Influence body shaming to social anxiety mediated by self-esteem

The second hypothesis predicts a negative effect of body shaming to self-esteem and positive influence on social anxiety, so that if the value of body shaming high then self-esteem will be low however social anxiety will also be high. Based on the

results of the study, it was found that there was a negative relationship between body shaming with self-esteem and there is a positive relationship with social anxiety, thus the second hypothesis is accepted. This is in accordance with the initial theory that suspected this influence, as stated by Mason & Lewis (2016) that body shaming make an impact towards social anxiety for those who experience it. You et al. (2019) support the results of research that individuals with low self-esteem will feel afraid and worried about negative evaluations from the surrounding environment, this then triggers higher social anxiety. Research conducted by Wu et al. (2021) also showed the same results that victims of bullying also showed a positive association with social anxiety. The study also shows that there are several factors that can mediate this relationship and one of them is self-esteem, where the higher the self-esteem, the lower the social anxiety (Jiang & Ngien, 2020).

Social anxiety is a common symptom experienced by many individuals who have experienced a traumatic event that creates a fear of meeting other people. Kawamichi et al (Kawamichi et al., 2018) suggested that self-esteem is a product of the social environment as a feeling towards the results of the current self-evaluation. The same thing was stated by Jankovic et al (Jankovi, 2021) which describes self-esteem as an evaluative result of self-image that is reflected through positive and negative feelings towards oneself and shows the level of confidence and self-worth.

Research conducted by (Lubis et al., 2019), that individuals who experience social anxiety often require various efforts to be able to reduce anxiety in socializing with other people. Self-esteem is one of the triggers of high and low social anxiety (Kim & Kim, 2019), where self-esteem low levels can lead to social anxiety, however, self-esteem high can be a buffer or filter that can reduce social anxiety. This is in line with the research results (Nguyen et al., 2019), that

self-esteem a low one can trigger an increase anxiety. Kan Ou (K Kan Ou Zi, nd) argues that self-esteem is formed by the conditions of the social environment in which the individual is located, and that the level of individual self-esteem depends on the individual's position in the social environment. This statement shows that the high and low self-esteem in individuals is very dependent on the environment that shapes it.

Eva (Eva et al., 2015) states that body shaming has an influence on a person's self-esteem. The same opinion was also expressed by Gam (Gam et al., 2020) which states that body shaming reduces self-esteem, reduces body satisfaction and can lead to symptoms of depression.

Respondents in this study were undergraduate students, where respondents were still in the age stage of searching for identity. According to (YahooLife, 2016) that the younger a person is, the focus is still on the perfection of the physical body. This is because individuals who are older, have experienced various things in their lives and have obtained various kinds of achievements in other fields (eg family, children, career, business) so that they are no longer only focused on personal physical perfection. Safarina and Maulayani (Safarina & Maulayani, 2021) state that self-esteem of victims of body shaming is also influenced by how much self-acceptance from the victim.

This study has several limitations, including pandemic conditions that do not support data collection, which must be done online, so that anyone who answers the scale shared cannot be known.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results and discussion in this study, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between body shaming and social anxiety in students of the

Department of Aquaculture, where the higher the body shaming, the higher the social anxiety. In addition, it is known that self-esteem mediates the relationship between body shaming and social anxiety in students of the Department of Aquaculture

Suggestions that can be given based on the results of the research along with the discussion and conclusions above are first addressed to students of the Department of Aquaculture. The results of this study indicate that the body shaming experienced by students of the Department of Aquaculture has the potential to increase social anxiety. For this reason, it is necessary to understand the importance of self-esteem because self-esteem in this study shows that it can mediate social anxiety in students who experience body shaming.

The second suggestion can be given to educational institutions in general. The results of this study indicate that the ability to manage themselves is needed by students. One of them is to mediate oneself when experiencing body shaming or other things, especially on campus or in other environments, which can trigger the emergence of social anxiety and other mental disorders. For this reason, it is hoped that educational institutions can increase awareness of the possibility of body shaming in the educational environment. In addition, it is recommended to be able to equip students with self-esteem training to strengthen students' mentality if they experience body shaming.

The third suggestion was to other researchers. The results of this study can be a platform for other researchers who are interested in exploring the same research field and are expected to be input for the next research theme with a wider range of respondents and more diverse backgrounds.

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