



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BODY SHAMING AND STRESS LEVELS OF THE NINTH-GRADE STUDENTS AT SMPN 4 BOJONEGORO

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Research Report

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Adolescence is marked by changes in growth and development that occur very rapidly. Adolescents will experience stages towards social and economic independence, identity building, acquisition of skills for adult life, and the ability to negotiate. Body shaming, weight shaming, or harassment based on appearance can be described as mocking or humiliating someone based on their physical appearance. The study aimed to determine the relationship between body shaming behaviour and the stress levels of the ninth graders at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro. **Methods:** The design of this research was a cross-sectional analysis. The population was 80 ninth graders obtained by using a purposive sampling technique. The students were experiencing body shaming. The research data were taken using the Body-Shaming questionnaire to measure body shaming behaviour and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) 42 questionnaire to measure stress levels. **Results:** The results showed that 9 out of 11 students (81.8%) who experienced severe body shaming behaviour had extreme stress levels, 37 out of 38 students (97.4%) students who participated in proper body shaming behaviour had moderate stress levels, 18 out of 31 students (58.1%) who experienced mild body shaming behaviour had mild stress levels. Based on the results of the data above, a statistical test was obtained with a significance value of  $p \text{ sign} = 0.01$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). **Conclusions:** It can be concluded that there is a relationship between body shaming behaviour and the stress levels of the ninth graders at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro.

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### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental period of transition from childhood to adulthood (Rahayu, 2019). Adolescence means to grow or develop towards maturity, such as mental, emotional, social, psychological and physical maturity (Widyastuti, 2018).

Adolescence is marked by changes in growth and development that occur very rapidly both physically, psychologically and intellectually. Adolescents will also experience stages towards social and economic independence, identity building, acquisition of skills for adult life and the ability to negotiate (Kusumaryani, 2017). WHO defines “adolescents” as individuals in the age group of 10 to 19 years. The transition from childhood to adulthood is marked by dramatic changes in physical, mental, sexual, psychological and social development.

These turbulent years can have long-term consequences for individuals, especially when it comes to mental health. Teenagers have to learn how to deal with it. Adolescence is also a phase

where individuals grow to be openly aware of their appearance and outward appearance. Body shaming, weight shaming, or harassment based on appearance can be described as mocking or humiliating someone based on their physical appearance. With the emergence of “influencers” on social media and the spread of news about how one should look, teenagers, at an impressive age but not yet mature, are increasingly falling into the idea of an “ideal body”. This always leads to anyone who doesn’t fit this image, being shamed for their appearance. This influence can further lead to unhealthy expectations about body shape among adolescents, within themselves and others, which in turn can lead to some ridicule of young people of healthy weight who do not conform to cultural ideals (Gam et al., 2020).

KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission) noted that based on the results of a survey conducted in 2019 as many as 68% of body shaming cases were carried out by vocational students in Indonesia (Pratama & Rahmasari, 2020). Based on the results of the ZAP Clinic

survey in 2020, it was found that around 62.2% of respondents said they had been victims of body shaming. Respondents aged 13-22 years were the most victims of body shaming with a percentage of 67.8%.

Based on the results of the initial survey on November 24, 2021 conducted at SMPN 4 Bojonegoro as many as 14 students who filled out the research questionnaire and there was body shaming behavior in 10 students out of 14 students who had experienced body shaming treatment and including mild stress 2 students, moderate stress 3 students, and stress 5 students. In addition, when the researchers conducted interviews at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro with Guidance Counseling (BK) teachers, it was found that students often carried out body shaming actions such as making fun of, berating, calling names by the names of their parents and insulting the body shape of their classmates. too fat or too thin. Researchers also conducted interviews with 14 students, 9 boys and 5 girls. It was found that 10 out of 14 students said they had experienced bullying (body shaming) at SMPN 4 Bojonegoro.

The factors that cause body shaming behavior are the culture of patrons, clients which means people who are above or have excess wealth, are famous and have power that can do anything. Long time ago, people who did body shaming were not detected, but now they leave traces on social media and make the object feel uncomfortable because it is spread more widely. In the past, the most insults were heard by one or two people, but now the whole world could hear it and make people who receive insults even more stressed. Patriarchy is when women tend to be the object of jokes about fat bodies, thin bodies, items. Indonesians always see women as white, tall, and perfect. While short, black, and big body is bad (Rahmawati, 2018). Victims of body shaming feel offended and even hurt which can have a further impact on their mental health. Maybe for some people the act of body shaming is just a joke, but if it is done continuously it will certainly have an impact on their mentality (Rachmah & Baharuddin, 2019). Body shaming behavior has an impact on both the perpetrator and the victim. The impact of body shaming is low self-confidence, feeling ashamed, angry, irritable and even experiencing stress, as well as mental disorders such as depression (Lestari, 2019).

There are various ways to deal with body shaming including by changing lifestyle, proving your quality, trying to accept your strengths and weaknesses, thinking positively and staying away from people who often do body shaming (Sakinah, 2018). Another way that can be taken to overcome body shaming is to conduct a campaign. Body shaming campaign is expected to reach the general public, especially the perpetrators of body shaming who are not aware that their actions are a form of violence, especially teenagers with an age range of 15-18 years as the main target (Putri et al., 2018). According to researchers, how to deal with body shaming behavior is by showing the strengths that exist in yourself and covering up weaknesses, yourself and ignoring other people's words that are detrimental to yourself, always thinking that you have more potential than others and always filtering what people are saying.

In light of those explanations, this research was conducted to was to determine the relationship between body shaming behavior and the stress levels of the ninth graders at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design of this research was a cross-sectional analysis. The population was 80 ninth-grade students which was obtained by using purposive sampling technique. The research data were taken by using the Body Shaming questionnaire to measure body shaming behavior and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) 42 questionnaire to measure stress levels. The data were analyzed by using the Spearman's Rho Test.

## RESULTS

SMPN 4 Bojonegoro is one of the junior high schools in Bojonegoro accredited A. It has a green and beautiful atmosphere colors. SMPN 4 Bojonegoro has received many awards ranging from district to national and continue to activate environmental programs as an effort to make one of the Eduagrowisata school. SMP N 4 Bojonegoro is located on Jl. First Lieutenant Suyitno No.27 Bojonegoro, Mulyoagung, Bojonegoro District, Bojonegoro Regency, East Java Province, with postal code 62119. The land area of SMP N 4 Bojonegoro is 104542 m<sup>2</sup>.

Table 1. Participants' Characteristics

| Characteristics | Frequency | Precentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Gender</b>   |           |            |
| Male            | 29        | 36,3       |
| Female          | 51        | 63,7       |
| <b>Age</b>      |           |            |
| 12 Years        | 11        | 13.8       |
| 13 Years        | 33        | 41.3       |
| 14 Years        | 36        | 45.0       |

|              | Characteristics | Frequency | Precentage |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Class</i> |                 |           |            |
| A            |                 | 13        | 15,0       |
| B            |                 | 39        | 48,8       |
| C            |                 | 29        | 36.3       |

Date on table 1 shows 51 female students (63.7%) and 29 male students (36.3%), 36 students aged 14 years (45.0%), 11 students aged 12 years (13.8%), 33 students are 13 years old (41.3%), and

then 39 students are from Class B (48.8%), 13 students (15.0%) are from Class C.

Table 2. Distribution by Body Shamming and Stress Levels in March

| Variable        | Frequency | Precentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Body Shamming : |           |            |
| Severe          | 11        | 13,8       |
| Fair            | 38        | 47,5       |
| Mild            | 31        | 38,8       |
| Stress Levels:  |           |            |
| Normal          | 11        | 13,8       |
| Mild            | 93        | 22,5       |
| Moderate        | 39        | 48,8       |
| Severe          | 10        | 12,5       |
| Very Severe     | 2         | 2,5        |
| Total           | 80        | 100        |

Data on Table 2 shows that 38 students (47.5%) of the ninth-grade students experienced body shaming in fair category and 11 students (13.8%) experienced

body shaming in mild category. 39 (48.8%) students experienced moderate stress and 2 students (2.5%) experienced very severe stress.

Tabel 3. Distribution of the Relationship between Body Shamming and Stress Levels

| Body Shamming | Stress Levels |       |        |       |          |       |      |       |        |       | Total |      |
|---------------|---------------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|
|               | Very Severe   |       | Severe |       | Moderate |       | Mild |       | Normal |       |       |      |
|               | n             | %     | n      | %     | n        | %     | n    | %     | n      | %     | n     | %    |
| Severe        | 2             | 18.2% | 9      | 81.8% | 0        | 0.00% | 0    | 0.00% | 0      | 0.00% | 11    | 100% |
| Fair          | 0             | 0.00% | 1      | 2.6%  | 37       | 97.4% | 0    | 0.00% | 0      | 0.00% | 38    | 100% |
| Mild          | 0             | 0.00% | 0      | 0.00% | 2        | 6.5%  | 18   | 22.5% | 11     | 35.5% | 31    | 100% |
| Total         | 2             | 2.5%  | 10     | 12.5% | 39       | 48.8% | 18   | 22.5% | 11     | 13.8% | 80    | 100% |

Asymp.Sig (2-Sided) = 0.000 < P (0.05) R = 0.01

Table 4 shows that students who experience body shaming behavior have a severe stress level of 9 students (81.8%) and 2 students (18.2%) have a very severe stress level. Students who experience moderate body shaming behavior have moderate stress levels, 37 (97.4%) students and 1 (2.6%) student have severe stress levels. Students who experience mild body shaming behavior are 18 (58.1%) with mild stress levels and 2 (6.5%) students have moderate stress levels.

## DISCUSSION

### Stress Levels of the Ninth Graders at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro

Data on Table 4 shows that 39 students (48.8%) experience moderate stress levels, 18

The significance of the two variables was tested using the Spearman's Rho test with a value of 0.000 with a significant level ( $p < 0.05$ ) meaning that H1 was accepted, or there was a relationship between body shaming behavior and the stress levels of the ninth-grade students at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro with the level of average relationship strong with a value of  $r = 0.01$ . In accordance with the interpretation table, the hypothesis test was strong if the value of  $r$  was  $0.6 - < 0.8$ .

(22.5%) students experience mild stress, 11 (13.8%) students experienced normal stress, 10 (12.5%) students experienced severe stress, 2 (2.5%) students experienced very severe stress.

According to Hafifah (2017) stress experienced by adolescents is an unpleasant response, various conditions and demands that are less pleasant, various circumstances that exceed the ability of individuals (adolescents) in overcoming problems will have an impact on the physical and psychological conditions of adolescents. This will interfere with the physical and emotional health of adolescents and destroy the motivation to achieve their goals.

According to Fransiska (2018), stress experienced by adolescents causes pressure that requires distribution so that there is no failure in the adolescent development process. Adolescents will experience disappointment, dissatisfaction and even frustration and in the end will interfere with growth and development if their needs are not met. Entering a new environment for adolescents can be a stimulus that causes various problems in the early days of school, one of which is stress.

Based on the theory and facts above, it can be concluded that the level of stress in students is influenced by various factors. Body shaming behavior factor is a trigger for stress in students but if the student is able to control his mindset and is able to adapt to the environment or the problems, they experience will actually reduce the level of stress on these students.

#### **Body Shaming Experienced by the Ninth-Grade Students at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro**

Data on Table 3 shows that 38 (47.5%) students experienced moderate body shaming behavior, 11 (13.8%) students experienced severe body shaming behavior, and 31 (38.8%) students experienced mild body shaming behavior. From these facts, it shows that almost all students experience body shaming behavior.

Rilla (2018) states that the characteristics of people who can experience bullying are weak, difficult to get along with others, not confident, not beautiful/handsome, physically deficient, different from others, and so on. During adolescence, bullying often occurs, such as body shaming (Hasibuan & Wulandari, 2015). Some of the factors that influence it are peers. Some teenagers tend to do body shaming because they feel they are greater (Rilla, 2018).

The researcher assumes that body shaming at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro is caused by the response given, namely by doing body shaming back to other people who do body shaming to him/her. Some people who experience body shaming also do the same thing to others as a form of self-defense. Negative resistance happens because the act of body shaming. Even though it is considered a joke, it is still included in the bullying category. Resistance from the positive side can be by introspection and making changes for the better. Students who experienced body shaming at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro were found to be ashamed of themselves.

Individuals who experience body shaming led to more bad things. However, body shaming can also cause a person to want to improve himself.

#### **The Relationship between Body Shaming and Stress Levels at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro**

Based on Table 5, 9 out of 11 students (81.8%) who experienced high body shaming behavior had severe stress levels while 2 out of 11 students (18.2%) had very severe stress levels. 37 out of 38 students (97.4%) students who experienced moderate body shaming behavior had moderate stress levels while 1 out of 38 students (2.6%) had severe stress levels. 18 out of 31 students (58.1%) who experienced light body shaming behavior had mild stress levels while 2 out of 31 (6.5%) had moderate stress levels.

The significance of the two variables was tested by using the Spearmen Rho test with a value of 0.000 with a significant level ( $p < 0.05$ ) meaning that H1 is accepted. It can be said that there is a relationship between body shaming behavior and the stress levels of the ninth-grade students at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro with the average level of the relationship. strong with a value of  $r = 0.01$ . In accordance with the interpretation table, the hypothesis test is said to be strong if the value of  $r = 0.6 - < 0.8$ .

According to Noe et al., (2019) the stress experienced by adolescents creates pressure that requires channeling so that there is no failure in the adolescent development process. Adolescents will experience disappointment, dissatisfaction and even frustration and will ultimately interfere with growth and development if their needs are not met. Entering a new environment for teenagers can be a stimulus that causes various problems in the early days of school, one of which is stress.

According to Dolezal (2015) Body shaming is an act of criticizing, commenting on, or comparing the physical appearance of others and themselves. In the Oxford dictionary, it is explained that body shaming is an act of insulting, commenting on, and criticizing about the body or body size, whether carried out by others or by oneself, which aims to embarrass the individual.

This is due to the stage of psychological development experienced by adolescents. Psychological changes at this time are starting to pay attention to appearance, identifying themselves with idolized characters, and also starting to depend on peers and the social environment. Thus, if there are negative comments from others about their physical appearance, teenagers will be more easily depressed. They will do anything to get positive comments. In general, someone who experiences body shaming behavior leads to a lot of bad things. Body shaming is an individual experience where he/she feels that what he does is not in accordance with what is expected of himself and his environment. This

causes insecurity, shame, dissatisfaction in the body. However, body shaming can lead to self-improvement.

Based on the description of the facts and theories above, it can be concluded that the lower a person engages in body shaming behavior, the lower the level of stress that will later cause many psychological stress problems. One of the conditions experienced by adolescents because of the inability of psychological conditions to adapt to environmental demands. Adolescents who do not experience body shaming behavior will have a lower risk of experiencing stress because adolescents have confidence in their own abilities in dealing with problems. On the other hand, if teenagers often experience body shaming behavior, they will be easier to experience stress. If adolescents have high confidence in managing, implementing, and solving problems, they will not experience stress due to body shaming behavior because they are able to manage problems and control emotions and mindsets so that these problems can be overcome.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research and discussion as well as the objectives of this study, it can be concluded that most of the ninth-grade students at SMPN 4 Bojonegoro experience Body Shaming behavior. They also experience stress in various levels. Furthermore, the statistical analysis revealed that there is a relationship between body shaming behavior and stress levels at SMP N 4 Bojonegoro.

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