

## Support in Schools and School Well-Being: Self Esteem as a Mediator

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### ABSTRACT

Well-being at school is the hope for all students, helping them to survive their time there. However, many pupils experience low levels of well-being, which has an impact on their psychological state and academic outcomes. The purpose of this study is to determine whether social support in schools can strengthen the well-being of high school students in Surabaya. The approach taken in the research is quantitative correlational study. Data collection was made using self-report questionnaires to measure school well-being, support in schools, and self-esteem. The participants were 220 high school students. Path analysis procedures were performed to address the hypothesis; the results show that teachers' social support and friend social are related to direct and indirect school well-being mediated by self-esteem. The study suggests that students can improve their well-being through support from school and their own self-esteem, and that policymakers in schools, mainly school principals and teachers, can also improve such well-being. The limitations and implications of the findings are discussed for future research.

**Keywords:** school well-being; social support; teacher; student

### INTRODUCTION

Students' well-being is inseparable from how they evaluate their experience at school (Konu, 2002) Their assessment is beneficial to cognitive and affective components in the school context (Tian, Liu, Huang, & Huebner, 2013) The cognitive component refers to satisfaction at school, which is described as an assessment of students' cognitive experiences when they are at school, while the affective component is related to students' positive and negative emotions while at school. Positive emotions can be in the form of feeling relaxed and happy, whereas negative ones can manifest themselves in depression, confusion or boredom (Tian, Liu, et al., 2013). This theory refers to Diener's (1984) concept of subjective well-being.

Well-being at school is characterised by a positive and pleasant learning environment (Awartani, Whitman, & Gordon, 2008), and the positive emotions students (Alivernini & Manganelli, 2015; Konu, 2002). However, some students feel that the well-being of senior high school students is low. Several studies, including that of Drane (2005), have found that 15 percent of students experience dissatisfaction at school. Rohman and Fauziah (2017) report that around 5.7% of students at SMA Kesatrian 1 Semarang were in the low category of well-being, while

Ahkam (2019) found that 36 percent of students experienced problems with school dissatisfaction and felt negative emotions.

Low well-being in schools can hurt students, one of its causes being malicious behaviour towards them, such as aggressiveness (Nidianti & Desiningrum, 2015) and juvenile delinquency (Effendi & Siswati, 2017). Another negative impact is that students' psychological state (Ahkam, Dewi, & Nawangsari, 2020), such as their concentration is disturbed (Khatimah, 2015; Scrimin, Moscardino, Altoè, & Mason, 2016), or cases of low adversity intelligence (Rohman & Fauziah, 2017).

The findings of previous studies show that school well-being is influenced by social support related to school; for example, from teachers and peers (Tian, Du, & Huebner, 2015). Social support is related to aspects of well-being, including students' life satisfaction. Such support includes emotional support, appreciation support, instrument support and informational support (Guess & Mccane-Bowling, 2016). Informational support has the strongest relationship with student satisfaction at school because the support given by teachers is beneficial for students; for example, providing information when assistance is requested; providing explanations; and helping with problem-solving (Guess & Mccane-Bowling, 2016). Peer support can improve well-being in schools related to aspects of student satisfaction (Danielson, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2017). Previous research findings support the existence of direct and indirect well-being mediated by students' academic competence (Tian, Zhao, & Huebner, 2015), which demonstrates that students' academic ability as negotiated is only partial, meaning that there are other factors that can mediate.

Tian et al. (2015) only used scholastic competence as a mediator of social support related to students' well-being. Previous research found that social support correlated with self-esteem (Bint-E Tahir, Inam, & Raana, 2015; Ebru Ikiza & Cakar, 2010) and that self-esteem correlated with school well-being (Du, King, & Chi, 2017; Tian, Chen, & Huebner, 2013). Self-esteem is an overall self-evaluation that can be manifested in positive and negative attitudes towards particular objects; individuals who have high self-esteem will respect themselves and what they are, without comparing themselves with others (Rosenberg, 1965). This study aims to determine the relationship between support in schools and students' well-being mediated through self-esteem. We therefore propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Social support in schools affects students' well-being.

Hypothesis 2: Self-esteem mediates the relationship between social support at school and students' well-being.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The subjects were 220 high school students in Surabaya (male = 100 and female = 120). Several previous studies have reported that a number of research subjects over 100 is sufficiently representative for providing information. The subjects were obtained by using cluster sampling to determine the area of the school used on the research site. Because high school students in Surabaya are quite heterogenic. The social support from teachers and peers was measured using the teacher's social support subscales and peer social support measures on the Child and

Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASS) (Malecki, Demaray, & Elliot, 2000). This scale uses two dimensions which consist of 24 items. The value of Cronbach's alpha in other studies was 0.95 on the teacher support subscale and 0.95.

School well-being was measured using the Brief Adolescents' Subjective Well-Being in School scale (BASWBSS) (Tian, Du, & Huebner, 2014), on which items consist of two dimensions, namely satisfaction at school and affect in school. The satisfaction dimension consists of six items on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) and the affect dimension consists of two items on a scale of 1 (never) to 6 (always). Examples of teacher items provide excellent learning methods. Previous studies have shown that the reliability with Cronbach's alpha scores was  $\alpha = 0.82$ , and that the satisfaction sub-scale in the Cronbach's alpha value was 0.74 and 0.82 on the affect subscale in schools (Liu, Mei, Tian, & Huebner, 2016). In this study, Cronbach's alpha was  $\alpha = 0.81$ . Peer support in a sample of high school students in Southern China province (Liu et al., 2016). In this study Cronbach's alpha is  $\alpha = 0.83$ .

Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, which uses a dimension that consists of ten items. Ratings were made on a 4-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, to 4 = strongly agree). An example of an item was "Overall I am satisfied with myself". This scale showed reliability at alpha  $\alpha = 0.86$  (Tian, Liu, et al., 2013), with Cronbach's alpha of  $\alpha = 0.83$  (Kong, Ding, & Zhao, 2015). In the research, the Cronbach's alpha value was  $\alpha = 0.81$ . Path analysis procedures were performed to address the hypothesis. The data analysis technique uses the Jamovi tool to test the predictions of the direct and indirect influences of social support related to school towards gratitude through the mediation of self-esteem.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two alternative hypotheses were tested: Hypothesis 1, which proposed that social support in schools affected students' well-being; and Hypothesis 2, that self-esteem mediated the relationship between social support and well-being. The analysis test results show that support in schools directly affected students' well-being, with an effect estimate of  $b = 0.487$  ( $P < 0.001$ ). The indirect effects of support related to well-being through self-esteem were significant, with an effect estimate of  $b = 0.159$  ( $P < 0.001$ ). It was notable that 0.646 of the assessment supported the total school-related effect on students' welfare. It is also explained that school-related social support had better estimated effects on students' well-being through self-esteem.

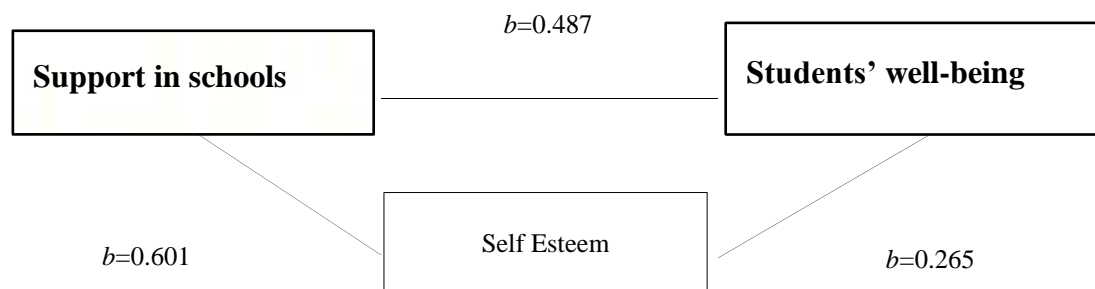


Figure 1. Mediated path school well-being

The research specifically aimed to establish the direction of social support in schools, there is school well-being in high school students. Empirically, it was found that there was an influence of social support on high schools students' well-being. These results support the findings of previous studies which have explained the effect of social support in schools on students' well-being (Liu et al., 2016; Tian, Zhang, & Huebner, 2015). Other research findings related to junior and senior high schools demonstrate the influence of social support in schools of direct and indirect impact through mediating scholastic abilities (Tian, Zhao, et al., 2015). The strength of the scholastics to act as a partial mediating model, this explains that other mediations play a role. This study found that self-esteem plays a mediating role between social support in schools and students' well-being. Several research findings have explained that there is a relationship between the level of social support and self-esteem (Bint-E Tahir et al., 2015; Ebru Ikiza & Cakar, 2010). One powerful social support influence on self-esteem is the support of friends (Bint-E Tahir et al., 2015), Various research findings show that self-esteem influences well-being in schools, namely the aspects of life satisfaction and positive affect (Du et al., 2017; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013).

Well and Marwell describe self-esteem as a psychological process that consists of judgments that underline the cognitive and affective roles that emphasise feelings (Mruk, 2006). Self-confidence can be seen in terms of four elements: first, as self-esteem, one particular attitude that can involve both positive and negative cognitive evaluations, and emotional responses to actions ; secondly, based on the differences in thought between the ideal and present experience ; third, self-esteem that focuses on psychological reactions described as a person's feelings, with the results being positive or negative ; and fourth, self-esteem as a component of personality. In this case, it is seen as a way of managing oneself related to motivation or self-regulation, or both. Self-esteem is relevant to people's perceptions of the quality of their lives regarding cognitive judgments and emotional reactions, such as positive emotions (Du et al., 2017). It has an essential war on individual well-being because it is related to attitudes that may or may not be beneficial. Other than that as an aspect of evaluating one's self-concept. Previous research explains that self-esteem can improve well-being in schools (Tian, Liu, et al., 2013).

Previous studies have only partially explained social support in schools and students' well-being. Effect self-esteem for school well-being. This study

simultaneously examined the direct and indirect effects of school-related support on high school students' well-being.

The limitations of the study are that the first it is correlational, so only connects the links between one theory and another. It could therefore be followed up with other approaches, such as longitudinal or experimental research to ascertain the effectiveness of the interventions made. Second, the research subjects were restricted to high school students in Surabaya, so the sample could be expanded by adding students from other cities so that the study could be generalised in the Indonesian context. Third, the findings of the study show self-esteem to be a mediator which acts as a partial mediation model, so other mediations could be used; for example, personality type.

Finally, support in schools and self-esteem are crucial variables in improving welfare in schools for students. Therefore, it is expected that teachers and schools should always provide positive support and enhance student welfare. In this way, students can increase their interest and skills with the full backing of their school.

## CONCLUSION

The research concludes that social support in schools, namely that of teachers and friends, can improve students' well-being. Other findings demonstrate that such support can improve well-being through partial the mediation of self-esteem. The study emphasises that social support and self-esteem are factors that are very important for students' well-being, especially high school students. It is also explained that self-esteem affects students' well-being. These findings can be a reference for teachers and schools in their frameworks for improving school welfare.

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