SOCIAL MEDIA AND TEENS' SELF-CONCEPT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Social media has emerged as a global phenomenon, profoundly shaping various dimensions of life, including the self-concept of Indonesian teenagers. This study presents a systematic review of literature that investigates the influence of social media on adolescents' self-concept within the unique cultural framework of Indonesia. Conducted following PRISMA guidelines, the review employed comprehensive searches in databases such as Google Scholar and ERIC. Findings from the 20 articles selected upon abstract and full article reviews reveal that social media affects self-concept through mechanisms such as social comparison, identity expression, and peer validation, with Indonesian cultural norms amplifying these dynamics. The review highlights both positive outcomes, such as enhanced self-expression and social support, and negative effects, including body dissatisfaction, anxiety, and reduced self-esteem, depending on factors like usage frequency and content type. A critical analysis of included studies identifies key moderators, including digital literacy and familial support, while offering actionable recommendations to mitigate risks and optimize benefits. By uncovering research gaps, this review provides a roadmap for future studies and interventions tailored to Indonesia's cultural context.

Keywords: Social media impact, adolescent self-concept, digital literacy, Indonesian context

Abstrak

Media sosial telah menjadi fenomena global yang secara signifikan memengaruhi berbagai aspek kehidupan, termasuk konsep diri remaja di Indonesia. Studi ini menyajikan tinjauan literatur sistematis yang mengeksplorasi pengaruh media sosial terhadap konsep diri remaja dalam kerangka budaya khas Indonesia. Dengan mengikuti pedoman PRISMA, tinjauan ini dilakukan melalui pencarian menyeluruh di basis data seperti Google Scholar dan ERIC. Hasil penelitian dari 20 artikel yang terpilih bedasarkan review abstrak dan artikel menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memengaruhi konsep diri melalui mekanisme seperti perbandingan sosial, ekspresi identitas, dan validasi teman sebaya, di mana norma budaya Indonesia memperkuat dinamika ini. Tinjauan ini menyoroti dampak positif, seperti peningkatan ekspresi diri dan dukungan sosial,

serta dampak negatif, seperti ketidakpuasan tubuh, kecemasan, dan penurunan harga diri, yang bergantung pada faktor seperti frekuensi penggunaan dan jenis konten. Analisis kritis terhadap studi yang disertakan mengidentifikasi moderator utama, termasuk literasi digital dan dukungan keluarga, serta memberikan rekomendasi yang dapat diimplementasikan untuk mengurangi risiko dan memaksimalkan manfaat. Dengan mengungkap kesenjangan penelitian, tinjauan ini menawarkan peta jalan untuk studi dan intervensi di masa depan yang disesuaikan dengan konteks budaya Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Dampak media sosial, konsep diri remaja, literasi digital, konteks indonesia

Introduction

Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter offer vast opportunities for teenagers worldwide, including in Indonesia, to engage in communication, entertainment, and self-expression. Ideally, these platforms serve as tools for fostering creativity, building social connections, and promoting positive self-development. Adolescence, a critical stage for identity formation, could benefit immensely from the potential of these platforms to facilitate healthy interactions and support (Santrock, 2019). In an ideal scenario, teenagers use social media to showcase their unique talents, receive constructive feedback, and build confidence in their identities.

However, the reality often diverges from this ideal. Social media frequently fosters social comparison and the reinforcement of idealized self-images, which can have mixed effects on teenagers' self-concept. Positive outcomes, such as validation and community support, coexist with challenges like body dissatisfaction, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Studies indicate that some teenagers use social media to seek peer validation or establish identity, but this usage often comes at the cost of increased vulnerability to negative feedback and cyberbullying (Vogel et al., 2014).

Further complicating this reality is the diverse way Indonesian teenagers interact with social media. Urban teenagers often have more exposure to influencers, curated lifestyles, and global trends, amplifying the pressure to conform to idealized beauty and success standards. In contrast, teenagers in rural areas may rely on social media to bridge gaps in connectivity but often experience cultural tension when integrating modern social media influences with traditional community values. These complexities result in a dichotomous impact where social media serves both as a bridge to global opportunities and as a source of psychological distress.

Additionally, the prevalence of cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and unrealistic portrayals of life further exacerbate these issues. For instance, teens who fail to meet social media's perceived standards of success often report feelings of inadequacy and isolation. As noted by Wijaya et al. (2017), visual content highlighting unattainable beauty standards significantly impacts

teenagers' body image and self-esteem. These challenges underline the gap between the ideal and the reality of social media use among Indonesian adolescents.

Empirical and theoretical data highlight the significance of this phenomenon in the Indonesian context. Studies show that 95% of Indonesian teenagers are active social media users, with platforms like Instagram and TikTok dominating usage patterns (Santoso et al., 2019). This widespread engagement underscores the pervasive influence of social media on adolescents' daily lives.

Theoretical frameworks, such as Social Comparison Theory, explain how teenagers evaluate their self-worth by comparing themselves to others on social media. This is particularly pronounced in Indonesia's collectivist culture, where societal approval plays a pivotal role in shaping identity (Rahmawati, 2021). Empirical evidence further supports these assertions. A study by Lestari et al. (2018) revealed that peer pressure amplified the adverse effects of social comparisons, particularly among female users. Metadata analysis from 20 reviewed studies consistently shows a correlation between social media usage frequency and fluctuating self-concept clarity among Indonesian teenagers.

For instance, Hakim et al. (2020) found that 40% of teens who experienced cyberbullying reported significant declines in self-esteem. Similarly, Pratama & Handayani (2020) identified a direct relationship between social media addiction and emotional instability. These data points reflect a pattern where the extensive use of social media often intensifies vulnerabilities, especially in the absence of mitigating factors like digital literacy or strong familial support.

Addressing these challenges requires a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms driving social media's impact on self-concept, particularly in the Indonesian context. This review provides a comprehensive examination of existing literature, identifying key factors that shape this relationship. By uncovering mechanisms, cultural moderators, and actionable solutions, such as enhancing digital literacy and encouraging parental involvement, this study aims to inform interventions for future studies that can minimize risks while maximizing the benefits of social media for Indonesian teenagers.

This study explores the relationship between social media usage and the self-concept of Indonesian teenagers, aiming to unravel its multifaceted impact. The primary research question is: How does social media usage influence the self-concept of teenagers in Indonesia? This inquiry focuses on the psychological and cultural mechanisms through which social media shapes adolescents' perceptions of themselves.

A secondary question investigates the variation in self-concept between different groups: Are there differences in self-concept between teenagers who actively use social media and those who do not? By contrasting active and non-active users, the study seeks to identify patterns of vulnerability or resilience linked to social media engagement.

Lastly, the study examines the contextual factors that moderate this relationship: What factors amplify or mitigate social media's influence on teenagers' self-concept in Indonesia? Here, the role of cultural norms, digital literacy, and familial support are explored to provide a nuanced understanding of these influences.

The primary objective of this research is to systematically review existing literature to identify how social media usage affects the self-concept of Indonesian adolescents. Specifically, it aims to:

1. Analyze the psychological and cultural dynamics that shape social media's impact on adolescent self-concept.

2. Compare the self-concept of active and non-active social media users to uncover disparities.

3. Identify key moderating factors, such as digital literacy, peer influence, and cultural values, that either exacerbate or reduce the risks associated with social media use.

4. Provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders, including educators, parents, and policymakers, to mitigate negative outcomes and enhance positive experiences for teenagers in Indonesia.

This study contributes uniquely to the field by situating the impact of social media on adolescent self-concept within the Indonesian cultural context, a perspective that is underexplored in existing literature. While many studies investigate global patterns, this research highlights the role of collectivist cultural values, digital literacy gaps, and rural-urban disparities in moderating social media's effects. Furthermore, the study addresses the dual impact of social media, offering a balanced analysis of its potential for both harm and growth. By integrating these elements, the research provides culturally tailored insights and a foundation for interventions designed to promote healthier social media use among Indonesian teenagers.

Methodology

This study utilized a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology, adhering to PRISMA guidelines. The research process involved identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant studies from credible academic sources. Databases such as Google Scholar and ERIC (Education

Resources Information Center) were utilized to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant literature.

To refine search results, Boolean operators (AND, OR) were applied. Keywords such as "social media," "self-concept," "teenagers," and "Indonesia" were used, generating queries like "social media AND teenagers AND Indonesia" and "self-concept AND social media." The use of Boolean operators ensured that the search captured diverse and relevant studies aligned with the research focus.

The study followed the PICOC framework to establish a clear research scope. The population targeted was teenagers in Indonesia, with the intervention being social media usage. Comparisons were drawn between active and non-active social media users to determine variations in self-concept. The primary outcome measured was the impact of social media on self-concept, within the cultural and social norms of Indonesia as the context.

Inclusion criteria required studies to be empirical or reviews addressing the topic, published in peer-reviewed journals from 2013 to 2023, in English. Exclusion criteria filtered out opinion articles, unrelated studies, and publications before 2013. This rigorous selection process ensured that only relevant and high-quality studies were included.

The research procedure consisted of several stages. Initially, literature was identified through systematic keyword searches. Titles and abstracts were then screened for relevance based on the established criteria. Full-text articles that passed the screening stage were reviewed for eligibility, focusing on their methods, findings, and cultural contexts. Key information was extracted during the data extraction stage, including methodological details, significant findings, and contextual relevance.

Finally, a thematic synthesis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and themes within the literature. Themes such as social comparison, identity expression, and cultural moderation were categorized, highlighting the nuanced dynamics of social media's impact on teenagers' self-concept in Indonesia. By employing thematic coding, the analysis provided an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, offering insights into mechanisms, cultural factors, and intervention possibilities as seen in the following table:

Article Title	Author(s)	Year	Findings	Relevance to Research Questions
The Role of Social Media in Adolescent Self-Esteem	Ahmad et al.	2020	Social media increases self-esteem when used for positive validation but decreases it with negative feedback.	Explores mechanisms like social comparison and validation.
Social Media and Identity Development in Adolescence	Rahmawati et al.	2021	Identity formation is influenced by peer interaction on social media; cultural norms amplify this effect.	Discusses cultural moderations in social media impact.
The Psychological Effects of Social Media on Indonesian Teenagers	Santoso et al.	2019	Highlights both positive effects (creativity, connectedness) and negatives (anxiety, body image issues).	Comprehensive exploration of both positive and negative outcomes.
Digital Literacy and Adolescent Self-Concept in Rural Indonesia	Utami & Sari	2022	Digital literacy mitigates negative impacts by fostering critical thinking about content.	Focuses on interventions to minimize negative outcomes.
Social Media Comparison and Peer Pressure	Lestari et al.	2018	Peer pressure exacerbates negative self-comparisons among teens on social media.	Examines peer-related factors in social media impact.
Cyberbullying and Adolescent Mental Health	Hakim et al.	2020	Cyberbullying significantly correlates with lower self-esteem and increased anxiety among teens.	Highlights risks associated with online interactions.

Title	Author	Year	Findings	Focus
The Impact of Visual Content on Self-Perception	Wijaya et al.	2017	Visual content emphasizing beauty standards fosters body dissatisfaction in teens.	Analyzes content-driven influences on self-concept.
Adolescent Peer Networks and Social Media	Kusuma & Darmawan	2019	Peer networks on social media influence identity construction positively and negatively.	Focuses on the role of social networks.
Gender Differences in Social Media Impact	Maharani et al.	2021	Gender differences exist in how social media affects self-concept, with girls more prone to body image issues.	Explores demographic variations.
Social Media Addiction and Self-Concept	Pratama & Handayani	2020	Social media addiction weakens self-concept clarity and increases emotional instability.	Investigates overuse and its psychological effects.
Content Moderation and Teen Mental Health	Faridah et al.	2022	Effective content moderation reduces exposure to harmful material, improving mental well-being.	Discusses potential solutions to mitigate risks.
Influencers and Teen Identity Development	Putra et al.	2021	Teenagers model behaviors and self-presentation styles after influencers, both positively and negatively.	Analyzes influencer-driven impacts.
Cultural Values and Social Media Usage	Siregar et al.	2019	Cultural values in Indonesia moderate the influence of social media on identity expression.	Explores contextual factors.

Self-Concept in Urban vs. Rural Adolescents	Arifin & Susanti	2018	Urban teens report more exposure to unrealistic standards, while rural teens feel less pressure but more isolation.	Compares regional differences in experiences.
Parental Involvement in Social Media Use	Hasanah & Widodo	2020	Parental monitoring reduces negative social media effects and strengthens positive outcomes.	Discusses family influence.
Adolescent Coping Mechanisms on Social Media	Nurhayati et al.	2021	Coping mechanisms like self-regulation mitigate negative impacts of social media.	Investigates resilience factors.
Digital Literacy in Indonesian Adolescents	Kusnadi et al.	2022	Digital literacy enhances critical engagement with content, reducing susceptibility to harmful effects.	Discusses intervention strategies.
Social Media as a Tool for Peer Support	Suhendra et al.	2020	Social media fosters peer support networks, enhancing emotional well-being and self-esteem.	Explores positive uses of social media.
Adolescent Social Media Detox	Rahadian et al.	2021	Social media detox periods improve self-concept clarity and reduce anxiety.	Examines practical interventions.
Media Exposure and Adolescent Body Image	Dewi et al.	2019	High exposure to media showcasing unrealistic beauty standards is linked to lower body satisfaction.	Analyzes media-driven pressures on body image.

Results

The findings of this systematic review reveal that social media significantly influences the self-concept of Indonesian teenagers in various ways. Social media platforms have been identified as a

medium where teenagers often engage in social comparison, identity expression, and peer validation, each of which contributes differently to their self-concept.

One prominent theme is social comparison. Teenagers frequently compare themselves to idealized images and curated lifestyles presented on social media, leading to dissatisfaction and lowered self-esteem. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among users who follow influencers or celebrities. The "highlight reel" effect—where individuals display only the most favorable aspects of their lives—exacerbates these feelings, making teens perceive their own lives as less exciting or successful. This effect aligns with findings from Wijaya et al. (2017), which emphasize how visual content promoting unattainable beauty standards contributes to body dissatisfaction among adolescents.

Another significant aspect is identity expression. Social media provides a platform for creative self-expression, enabling teenagers to curate an idealized version of themselves. Many teens report feeling validated when their posts receive likes, comments, or shares. This sense of validation often enhances their confidence and reinforces their sense of agency. However, the need to maintain this idealized persona can also result in stress and anxiety, particularly among active users who feel compelled to present a flawless online image.

The review also highlights the differences between active and non-active social media users. Active users often experience fluctuations in self-concept, largely influenced by interactions and feedback on social media. These users are more prone to anxiety related to maintaining their online personas. Conversely, non-active users tend to have a more stable self-concept but may feel disconnected from their peers, as social media has become a primary means of social interaction for many teenagers.

Cultural and contextual factors play a crucial role in moderating social media's impact. Indonesian teenagers, influenced by collectivist values, often navigate a delicate balance between self-expression and adherence to societal expectations. Teens with strong familial and social support systems are generally less affected by the negative aspects of social media and are better able to derive positive benefits. However, those in rural areas often report stress related to not meeting the urban-centric beauty and lifestyle standards popularized on social media platforms.

The review also underscores the dual impact of social media—both positive and negative. On the positive side, social media fosters increased social connectedness, peer support, and opportunities for self-expression. Teens engaging in interest-based communities often report feelings of empowerment and validation. On the negative side, the risks include body image issues, anxiety

from unrealistic expectations, and susceptibility to cyberbullying. These negative effects are intensified for users who lack digital literacy or robust social support systems.

Discussion

The dual impact of social media on teenagers' self-concept reveals a complex interplay of opportunities and risks. On one hand, platforms offer avenues for self-expression and peer support, enabling adolescents to explore their identities and connect with others. On the other hand, the same platforms expose users to negative social comparisons and pressures to conform to idealized standards, which can adversely affect self-esteem and emotional well-being. Within the Indonesian context, the cultural backdrop intensifies these dynamics. Collectivist values, which emphasize societal harmony and external validation, shape how teenagers interpret and internalize their social media experiences.

The findings of this review align with key psychological theories, such as Social Comparison Theory and Self-Discrepancy Theory, which highlight the significance of external validation in the formation of self-concept. Indonesian teenagers frequently engage in upward comparisons on social media, evaluating themselves against idealized portrayals of others. While positive feedback can enhance self-esteem and foster identity formation, negative comparisons may amplify feelings of inadequacy, especially when adolescents perceive a gap between their actual and ideal selves. Digital literacy emerges as a critical moderating factor, enabling teenagers to critically engage with content and mitigate harmful effects.

This study will also be beneficial in these following ways:

1. Digital Literacy Programs

    Educating teenagers about the curated nature of social media content is vital. School-based programs that teach critical thinking and resilience can help adolescents recognize and navigate the unrealistic portrayals often found online. Embedding these initiatives into the curriculum ensures that digital literacy becomes a cornerstone of adolescent education.

2. Parental Guidance

    Families play a pivotal role in shaping teenagers' online experiences. Encouraging open discussions about social media use can provide a supportive environment for adolescents to process their online interactions. Parents equipped with the knowledge to guide their children can act as a buffer against negative influences.

3. Policy Interventions

Social media platforms must prioritize stricter moderation of harmful content and actively promote positive, inclusive narratives. Policymakers and technology companies should collaborate to establish culturally sensitive content guidelines. Such partnerships can ensure that platforms are safer and more empowering spaces for adolescents.

Conclusions

This systematic review underscores the multifaceted impact of social media on the self-concept of Indonesian teenagers. While these platforms offer valuable opportunities for identity exploration and social connection, they also pose significant risks, such as negative social comparisons and self-esteem challenges. Addressing these issues requires an integrated approach that combines education, family involvement, and policy reform. Future research should explore the longitudinal effects of social media use and develop culturally tailored interventions to address the unique challenges faced by Indonesian adolescents in the digital age.

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