

Social Class and Self-Concept of Marginalized Adolescents

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Abstract

The current study aimed to describe adolescents' social class and self-concept at the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" learning house. The present study used mixed methods combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The data collection was conducted during the even semester in the academic year of 2022/2023, with 22 marginalized adolescents participating. All participants come from a family with a monthly income of up to IDR 1.800.000 (lower social class). Social class data was gathered using Interviews, observation and documentation studies. While data regarding self-concept was collected using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS). The current research used descriptive statistics and triangulation as data analysis techniques. The study's results found that parents' socio-economic class has a significant relationship with the formation of self-concept images of marginal adolescents. As a whole, the findings of this study revealed that 73.66% of the self-concept of marginalized adolescents is in the highly negative category. A negative self-concept is associated with the inability to control one's emotions and tends to have deviant behavior. Collaborative activities between parents, teachers, counselors, psychologists, and social welfare institutions are recommended to achieve the self-concept developmental milestone of marginalized adolescents.

Keywords: Social class, Self-concept, Marginalized Adolescents

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini melihat gambaran kelas sosial dan konsep diri remaja pada rumah belajar khatulistiwa berbagi. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah studi deskriptif kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam waktu 1 semester genap ditahun ajaran 2022/2023. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam menganalisis kelas sosial adalah wawancara, observasi dan studi dokumentasi. Sedangkan pengukuran konsep diri menggunakan TSSE (Tennessee Self Concept Scale). Subjek penelitian ini adalah remaja marginal dengan latar belakang ekonomi keluarga berpendapatan perbulan hingga Rp 1.800.000 (Kelas Sosial Bawah). Hasil penelitian ditemukan bahwa kelas sosial ekonomi orangtua memiliki hubungan dalam pembentukan gambaran konsep diri remaja marginal pada rumah belajar khatulistiwa berbagi. Temuan penelitian ini secara keseluruhan membahas konsep diri remaja marginal pada kategori tinggi negatif 73.66 %. Konsep diri negatif dikaitkan dengan ketidakmampuan mengontrol emosi diri dan cenderung memiliki perilaku yang menyimpang. Kegiatan kolaborasi direkomendasikan antara orangtua, Guru, Konselor, Psikolog, dan Lembaga kesejahteraan sosial untuk memenuhi kebutuhan perkembangan konsep diri remaja marginal di rumah belajar khatulistiwa berbagi.

Kata Kunci: Kelas Sosial, Konsep Diri, Remaja Marginal



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INTRODUCTION

After the Covid-19 pandemic, Indonesia has added a new category of

marginalized people. Marginalized groups are small groups categorized with pre-prosperous who grow up in injustice in

various aspects. If the old marginal community (before Covid-19) was a community that was marginalized because of social class, economic status, ethnic group, gender orientation, disability and so on. The new marginal community category (Post-Pandemic) is determined based on communities affected by the pandemic. Individu who act as breadwinners for the family but experience source of income loss, unilateral termination of employment (PHK) or died because infected Covid-19 virus will turn their families into new marginal groups economically, educationally and culturally. The interruption of children's opportunities to receive education and neglected parental responsibilities cause children to become mistrated and marginalized (Adiansyah, Maulidiana, & Gafallo, 2022). Adolescents in this study are a marginalized because of their parents' economic status, which affects their self-concept (Nurhasnah, Wandi, & Saputra, 2022). In March 2021, the number of poor people in West Kalimantan reached 367.89 thousand people (7.15%), 2.82 thousand less compared to September 2020, which amounted to 370.71 thousand people (7.24%) (Badan Pusat Statistik Kalimantan Barat, 2021). The data shows that there is a decrease in the number of marginalized groups in West Kalimantan. Gradually the people belong to marginalized group managed to improve their quality of life after being affected during the pandemic.

Improving the quality of life will affect the formation of self-concept of adolescents in their environment. Self-concept develop through unique experiences, social expectations and power structures, because the adolescent mediates the relationship between social context and individual behavior (Markus, 1987; Wehrle & Fasbender, 2020).

The purpose of this study is to describe social class and self-concept of marginalized adolescents at the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning Center. Marginalized adolescents live in a reservoir settlement area of the transmigrant group, the majority of whom are migrants from Java Island (Personal Communication, Anggita, 6 March 2022). Based on the results of documentation study (2022) the number of marginalized adolescents at the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning Centre is 46 people consisting of 18 boys and 27 girls. They have diverse family economic backgrounds, the majority of whom are laborer, scavengers, housewives and unemployed. Several other marginalized adolescents come from broken homes (orphans). Even so, there are some marginalized adolescents who attended college and continue their studies at Islamic boarding schools, so they are not active at "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House. (Personal Communication, Anggita, 6 March 2022).

Marginalized youth in the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House are teenagers who are active in school even though they are economically limited. Some of them managed to get scholarship from various foundations (Personal Communication, Anggita, and 6 March 2022). Education is a good support in the formation of self-concept. Self-concept is the basic motive for encouraging one's self to be strong in defending and maintaining a positive self-view (Wehrle & Fasbender, 2020). Because marginal teenagers who go to school tend to have positive behavior (Sumihudiningsih, 2020). Education is part of the social class that can elevated the status of human life.

Marginalized groups that have improved the quality of life can certainly

have the opportunity to become the upper social class. Upper social class, in forming self-concept, will more focus on income, education and profession more than identity (basic demographics, selected community, or socio-cultural orientation). (Easterbrook, Kuppens, & Manstead, 2020). Social class provides a level of social status and self-esteem, which can be psychologically satisfying and motivating in constructing self-identity or self-concept (Becker et al., 2014). Conversely, the lower social class will tend to consider identity conditions (basic demographics, chosen community, or socio-cultural orientation) rather than income, education and profession in forming self-concepts (Easterbrook et al., 2020).

Adolescents developmental task is the accomplishment of a healthy self-identity (LN, 2012). Self-identity will form self-concept in adolescents (Fazny, 2022). Adolescents who have a negative self-concept have the potential to experience high symptoms of depression (Tarlow & Haaga, 1996). The results of questionnaire survey in a preliminary study regarding the self-concept description of marginalized adolescents on March 6, 2002 regarding the problems faced in the last week by 17 marginalized adolescents, reported 88% (15 adolescents) confirmed having problems of confusion in recognizing oneself, 71% (12 adolescents) experienced problems easily thinking negatively/prejudiced, 53% (9 teenagers) had difficulty calming their emotions (feelings, thoughts and behavior), and 35% (6 teenagers) experienced stress. This data briefly describes the current state of self and the environment of marginalized adolescents, even though they receive educational support, they have another problem in their personality.

Researchers hypothesized that marginalized adolescents in the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House have high negative self-concept. The researchers' assumption is supported by the results of other studies, that female adolescents from the street children community (marginalized group) have the lower self-concept compared to orphanage adolescents (Purwanti, Koentjoro, & Purnamaningsih, 2000). The implications of this research can be a foundation for further research related to the issue of marginalized adolescent self-concept and social class. In addition, the implications of this research can be the core for providing counseling assistance and psychological intervention on self-concept of marginalized adolescents at the "Khatulistiwa Sharing" Learning House.

METHODS

Quantitative qualitative descriptive study research has been carried out within even semester in the 2022/2023 academic year. Based on the results of the preliminary study it was found that learning activities at "Khatulistiwa Sharing" Learning House during the pandemic could not run as they should because of activity limiting regulations so that the learning house only carries out limited activities with maximum of 20 children with activities in the form of playing and distributing basic necessities (personal interview, Anggita, 6 March 2022).

The population at the "Khatulistiwa Sharing" Learning House are 46 adolescents consisting of 27 girls and 18 boys. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. The number of samples in this study were 22 marginalized adolescents consisting of 11 girls and 11 boys aged 9 to 19 years. Sampling criteria

are adolescents who are still actively involved at the "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House and voluntarily participate in the study.

Table 1. Aspects Components of Self-Concept Instrument

Aspect Component	Description	Item Num ber	Results
a Body-image	Adolescent attitudes and values towards their bodies	1-5 5-14	Negative: Positive:
b Self-ideal	Adolescents' perceptions of their behavior are adjusted to personal standards	6-10 15-25	
c Self-esteem	Adolescents' assessment of the results achieved	11-15	
d Self-role	Patterns of behavior, attitudes expected of adolescents based on their position in society	16-20	
e Self-identity	The way adolescents understand themselves as a whole organism	21-25	

The validity of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS) questionnaire instrument was tested by Walter,S.Kep.,Ners.,M.Kep.,Sp.Kep.J, who is a PPNI Commissioner at the University of North Sumatra Hospital and obtained a Content value Validity Index (CVI) 1 ([Marbun, 2020](#)). While the results of the instrument Cronbach alpha reliability test were 0.963 which means perfect.

The first stage in this research is a preliminary study. Starting the initial data

collection with observation, interviews and documentation studies. The results of the preliminary study data form the foundation for determining the sampling technique and agreeing on the scheduling of research activities. In the second stage of the procedure, the researcher designed and prepared the TSCS questionnaire, interviews and observations. After all the instruments in this study had been tested for validity and reliability, the researcher continued the third stage of the procedure,

namely field work. Researchers began to carry out research activities for 1 semester. In the fourth stage, the researcher analyzed the data that had been collected regarding social class and self-concept of marginal adolescents at "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House. Lastly, the results of interview data and observations were analyzed using triangulation technique and member checks (qualitative data). Meanwhile, the results of the TSCS questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics (quantitative data).

RESULTS

The results of data analysis on the description of social class and self-concept of marginalized adolescents at "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House found as follows: Based on the results of a documentation study, the number of marginalized adolescents in "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" Learning House are 46 people

consisting of 18 boys and 27 girls. Marginalized adolescents come from different family economic backgrounds, the majority of whom work as laborers (34 parents), housewives (33 parents), unemployed (9 parents) and scavengers (6 parents). In addition, 8 other adolescents came from broken homes or orphans. Even so, it is known that some marginalized adolescents have gone to college and continue their studies at Islamic boarding schools, so they are not actively involve in activities at "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" learning house. (Personal communication, Anggita, 6 March 2022). So that the TSCS questionnaire filled by 22 adolescents consisting of 11 boys and 11 girls aged 9 to 19 years. The background of the family's social class based on the type of work of both parents of 22 marginal adolescents is presented as follows:

Table 2. Types of Occupation of Parents of 22 Marginalized Adolescents

Parents' job	Father	Mother
Laborer	15	2
Scavenger	2	2
Driver	1	-
Nanny	-	1
Taking care of household	-	16
Not working	4	1
Total	22	22

Based on Table 2, it is known that the majority of the types of work of marginalized adolescent parents are

laborers and scavengers, the main type of work class 9 which is blue collar workers ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2015](#)). The monthly blue-collar household income is known to

be up to IDR 1.800.000 ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019](#)).

The observation results at the first meeting on March 6, 2022 found that the body language of 17 marginalized adolescents tend to be self-closing. There were 5 children who did not dare to look at the researcher's face when asked to interact with them, the majority were more cautious, and hesitated when answering the researcher's greeting by making a small, vibrating voice. There are 1 to 2 adolescents who are the most prominent in their group interacting with high volume,

joking intensely to get the attention. However, when researchers invited them to interact, these adolescents tended to be passive and closed themselves off again. The author interprets the crowd of joking and chatting with other friends as a form of anxiety when facing new people (researchers) in their environment.

The following are the results of the TSCS questionnaire per component of the self-concept of 22 marginalized adolescents:

Table 3. Results of TSCS Questionnaire Each Component

Self-concept Component	Category	f	%
Body-image	Positive	15	68%
	Negative	7	32%
Self-ideal	Positive	4	18%
	Negative	18	82%
Self-esteem	Positive	5	28%
	Negative	17	72%
Self-role	Positive	6	27%
	Negative	16	73%
Self-identity	Positive	7	32%
	Negative	15	68%

Based on the table above, the majority of marginalized adolescents have a fairly high positive self-image (68%). On the other hand, the majority of marginalized adolescents have a negative self-ideal

(82%), negative self-esteem (72%), negative self-role (73%), and negative self-identity (68%).

Table 4. The complete results of TSCS

Variable	Category	f	%
Self-concept	Positive	37	34%
	Negative	73	66%

Overall, 66% of marginalized adolescents have negative self-concept and 34% have positive self-concept. The results of the TSCS questionnaire data were analyzed based on gender as follows:

Table 5. Analysis of the TSCS by gender

Self-concept component	Category	Girls		Boys	
		f	%	f	%
Body-image	Positive	9	82%	6	55%
	Negative	2	18%	5	45%
Self-ideal	Positive	2	18%	2	18%
	Negative	9	82%	9	82%
Self-esteem	Positive	2	18%	3	27%
	Negative	9	82%	8	73%
Self-role	Positive	4	36%	2	18%
	Negative	7	64%	9	82%
Self-identity	Positive	4	36%	3	27%
	Negative	7	64%	8	73%

The positive self-image component of marginalized young girls and boys is higher than the negative self-image. Marginalized adolescent girls have a more positive self-image (82%) than marginalized adolescent boys (55%). There is difference of 27% between girls marginalized adolescents and boys marginalized adolescents in positive self-image component. Additionally, the other components (ideal self, self-esteem, self-role, and self-identity) in female and male adolescents are in a higher negative category than positive. There is no self-ideal difference between female marginal

adolescents and male marginal adolescents. In contrast, the negative self-role of marginalized boys adolescents (82%) is higher than marginalized girls adolescents (64%). This means that the difference in the negative self-role of female adolescents is 18% different from that of male adolescents. The negative identity component of male adolescents (73%) is greater than that of female adolescents (64%).

The overall analysis of the TSCS based on gender presented as follows:

Table 6. Over all analysis of the TSCS based on gender

Variable	Category	Boys	
		Girls	Boys
		101	

Self-concept	Positive	f	%	f	%
		21	38%	16	29%
	Negative	34	62%	39	71%

Positive self-concepts of marginalized girls and boys are lower than negative self-concepts. The negative self-concept of marginalized boys adolescents (71%) is higher than marginalized girls adolescents (62%).

DISCUSSIONS

The body-image component is the image we have about body size, shape, and feelings about the characteristics and parts of the body that make up ourselves (Slade, 1994). The only positive self-concept component score owned by marginalized adolescents is body image with majority if 68%. This explains that the majority of marginalized adolescents' able to manage the development of self-image perception and self-attitude. Based on gender differences, female adolescents have a higher positive body image (82%) than male adolescents (55%).

Overall, marginalized adolescents, even though they receive formal education school, have higher negative self-concept (66%) than a positive self-concept (34%). Adolescents' negative self-concept is associated with the inability to control emotions, and tends to have deviant behavior. According to the results of a preliminary survey on March 6, 2002 regarding the problems encountered in the last week, 17 marginalized adolescents had difficulty calming their emotions (feelings, thoughts and behavior). The results of this study contradict the results of other studies that adolescents who attend school have a

positive self-concept (Uliyah, 2014) and marginalized adolescents who attend school tend to have positive behavior (Sumihudiningsih, 2020).

Children from low-income families are at risk for poor health, educational failure, and behavioral problems. By late adolescence, they have subjective family social status perceptions (SFSS) that are strongly associated with various health and well-being indicators, including depression, worry, create a problem, use of illegal drugs; optimism, not in education, unemployment and crime (Rivenbark et al., 2020). Conditions of deviant behavior were also encountered by researchers in the form of physical and verbal bullying among marginalized adolescents. Attitudes of masculinity in relationships with age differences and different family backgrounds (victims of bullying are marginalized orphans) triggering bullying to occur.

Marginalized adolescents grow up in isolated conditions with only the same social class status. So that these teenagers tend to close themselves and keep their distance from new people. They need time to validate their feelings of security, comfort and trust that other people will not discriminate or bully them. This is similar to the results of the preliminary study survey where 71% (12 adolescents) experienced problems easily thinking negatively and prejudiced. Accordingly, the results of the study showed that self-concept of street children tends to be

negative for dealing with other people who are come from different social economic background ([Suci, 2017](#)).

The component of self-esteem stresses four theoretical principles of the function of social class, namely the embodiment of self-assessment, self-perception, social comparison, and psychological centrality. The four functions have gaps that determine a person's self-esteem status. Initially, the nature of adolescents' social class was considered to determine a weak self-esteem, but with increasing age, socioeconomic position became more meaningful for self-esteem. ([Demo & Savin-Williams, 1983](#)). Therefore, the high negative self-esteem score in marginalized adolescents can be triggered by family's social class and economic background. Socioeconomic status (SES) had a small but significant relationship with the formation of self-esteem ($d = .15$, $r = .08$) in a meta-analysis of 446 samples (total participants $N = 312,940$) ([Twenge & Campbell, 2002](#)). Marginalized adolescents need assistance in bridging their dependence on their social group. Hierarchical linear regression shows the importance of family prosperity, extroverted personality dimensions, emotional stability, openness to experience, mental health subscales and social support from family and significant others in the formation of self-esteem ([Veselska et al., 2010](#)).

The self-ideal component in male and female adolescents has a negative score that considered high. The self-ideal is a personal standard in the form of perceptions, hopes and desires to be achieved by oneself in the future. The meaning of this high negative score is the inability of marginalized adolescents to control themselves and feel satisfied with their current states. Researchers consider this to be a good thing that can be used as a

motivation for marginalized adolescents to improve their behavior, social class status, life goals, and willingness to achieve goals. Similar to the results of other studies that found the happiness of marginalized people is by fulfilling their daily needs, getting a decent job, earning enough income, being able to access public services optimally, and obtaining maximum educational services ([Ilham & Farid, 2019](#)).

Components of the negative self-role of marginalized male adolescents (82%) higher than marginal female adolescents (64%). The self-role is related to the attitudes of marginalized adolescent behavior patterns that are expected based on their position in society. The self-role is related to the ability of marginalized adolescents to adjust to the environment, meet social demands and expectations. The negative self-identity component of male adolescents is higher than that of female adolescents. Self-identity is related to the ability to understand oneself holistically. The results of the negative self-identity scores of male and female adolescents are in line with the results of the preliminary study where 88% of marginalized adolescents confirmed that they had problems of confusion in recognizing themselves. Social expectations from family and peers are related to identity status among adolescents. Families have stronger relationships in middle adolescence, compared to early and late adolescence ([Suleeman & Saputra, 2019](#)).

CONCLUSIONS

The social class status of a community group will contribute to the formation of family character and adolescent self-concept. Marginalized adolescents in "Khatulistiwa Berbagi" learning house are adolescents who come

from lower social class economic background. They have a family income up to IDR 1.800.000 per month as laborers and scavengers. The results of this study reveal that overall, the self-concept of marginalized adolescents is in the negative category. Negative self-concept is associated with the inability to control one's emotions, and tends to have deviant behavior. Collaboration is recommended between parents, teachers, counselors, psychologists and social welfare institutions to meet the needs of self-concept development for marginalized adolescents.

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