

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The role of self-concept in student engagement among Muslim students with family support as a mediating variable

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ABSTRACT

The learning process is a crucial activity in enhancing the quality of learning outcomes, making the active role of students a significant factor. Family support influences student engagement in their learning at school. The research aims to examine the role of self-concept towards student engagement with family support as a mediating variable. This study utilizes a quantitative method involving data collection through scale completion. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, where samples are selected based on specific characteristics. The results of this research indicate that self-concept plays a significant role in student engagement with family support as a mediator, with a Sobel test statistic of $2.202 > 1.96$ and a two-tailed p-value of $0.02 < 0.05$. This suggests that self-concept significantly and positively influences student engagement, and family support can mediate the emergence of student engagement behavior.

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INTRODUCTION

Student engagement refers to students' ability to actively participate in the learning process effectively regarding cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects (Skinner & Pitzer, 2014). This definition aligns with Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris's (2019) view that student engagement is measured by three dimensions: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. Conversely, low student engagement or disengagement can be identified by students' need for more effort in participating in learning activities, such as completing assignments, their work quality, students' participation levels, and absenteeism (Dunkelberg, 2014).

Issues faced by students manifest as low academic achievement, indicated by the prevalence of students needing remedial exams, school truancy, boredom, and bullying. The problems that arise can be seen through students' display of negative behaviors, which in turn impacts their learning. Problematic behaviors exhibited by students may include apathy towards the learning process, lack of enthusiasm for attending school, sleeping in class, talking while the teacher is instructing, and even engaging in other deviant behaviors during the teaching and learning process.

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Student engagement has become crucial due to its various roles in learning (Reeve, 2016). Firstly, student engagement is a prerequisite for a productive learning experience, wherein students, as they develop knowledge, require effort, attention, commitment, and active interaction in the learning process. Secondly, student engagement can predict the functionality of an educational institution. This illustrates an educational institution's ability to produce exemplary academic achievements from students, whether their graduation stems from the institution or the place where they study. Thirdly, student engagement provides feedback on the performance of educators. In this case, it will reveal the educators' ability to motivate their learners. Fourthly, student engagement indicates a positive role in the learning process. This information is essential for an educational institution concerning factors influencing student engagement.

Appleton, Christenson, and Furlong (2018) also mentioned that students who are not engaged (disengaged) in the learning process tend to be apathetic, engage in conversations with peers, lack enthusiasm, lose focus, or even fall asleep during the learning process. Christenson (2016) added that student engagement declines as students' progress through elementary and middle school, reaching its lowest levels in high school, around 40-60%. As evidenced by Sa'diyah and Qudsyi's study (2016), many teenage students in Indonesia show disengagement behaviors, such as skipping school and not participating in class activities, including sleeping, using phones, or leaving the classroom.

Aligned with the issues above, in a study by Dharmayana (2015), it is stated that there are several negative aspects of students learning, including high levels of boredom in the classroom, quickly getting saturated, poor communication between students and teachers, student laziness in learning, lack of focus, truancy, school avoidance, lack of effort, and pessimism. Previously, Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2014) also discussed the same issues related to problematic student conditions, wherein students perceive school and all its activities as boring, dislike how they are taught, and feel dissatisfied with school.

Various negative behaviors exhibited by students above can be characterized as behaviors indicative of issues in student engagement (Fredricks et al., 2014). This is supported by research by Hirschfield and Gasper (2021), which indicates that truancy, brawls, and lack of respect toward teachers may lead students or children to problems related to student engagement. Similarly, Santrock (2018) describes the conditions of students who feel dissatisfied with their environment, lack commitment to their school, and even dislike the teachers who teach in the classroom.

Students with positive academic self-concepts enhance their self-regulation abilities and achievement motivation and promote good student engagement in the learning process (Galugu, 2019). Students with high self-concepts have high spirits when participating in classroom learning, thus impacting student behavior during learning, the concentration students devote while learning, and the accuracy and precision of students when analyzing tasks given by teachers. These findings align with the analysis conducted by Mukaromah et al. (2018) that students' self-concept regarding the difficulty level of tasks or materials can influence student learning behavior; students with self-concepts are inclined to work harder to complete tasks or understand the material.

Self-concept encompasses how individuals behave, feel, and evaluate their abilities, ultimately making them more confident and assured of their capabilities (Marsh, 2018). Hattie (Kavale & Mostert, 2014) defines academic self-concept as an individual's assessment in the academic domain. Several studies have also shown a positive and significant correlation between self-concept and student engagement. In developing students' learning potential, their interactions with their proximal social environment (such as the family environment) are crucial (Mudrak et al., 2020). Family support, including family socioeconomic status, parental support, parental expectations, family social and

material resources, etc., influences the development of learning competencies and motivation (Elliot et al., 2017; Ericsson et al., 2018). Family involvement in supporting students through the education process provides hope for students to engage in school and can even influence their achievement (Wang et al., 2012). Connell et al. (in Wulandari, 2020) mention that parental school support is predicted to enhance student engagement. This study examines the role of self-concept in the engagement of Muslim students with family support as a mediating variable.

METHOD

This study applied a quantitative method based on positivism philosophy to investigate a specific population or sample by collecting data using research instruments. Data analysis was quantitative or statistical, aiming to test the established hypotheses. The population under study comprised 964 Muslim students from SMA Negeri 5 Binjai. The sample consisted of 543 students, selected using a purposive sampling technique based on particular considerations or characteristics, as proposed by Sugiyono (2020). The variables investigated in this study were self-concept, student engagement, and family support. The functions of each variable are delineated as follows: (a) Dependent Variable: Student Engagement; (b) Independent Variable: Self-Concept; (c) Mediating Variable: Family Support. Data collection in this research employed three scales: self-concept, student engagement, and family support. Data analysis was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique, a multivariate statistical analysis method. SEM involves three simultaneous activities, namely the validation and reliability assessment of instruments (confirmatory factor analysis), testing the relationship model between variables (path analysis), and deriving a suitable model for prediction (structural model analysis and regression analysis).

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit index (Haryono, 2017)

Goodness of fit index	Cut off Value
χ^2 -chi square	$\leq \alpha \cdot df$
Probability	$\geq 0,05$
GFI	$\geq 0,90$
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$
CFI	$\geq 0,95$
TLI	$\geq 0,95$
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,0$
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$

The research procedures involve, firstly, using a method that begins with describing the issues related to the characteristics of the self-concept variable and family support as mediating variables, with student engagement as the dependent variable. Second, the process entails identifying and determining the relationship between each variable under study.

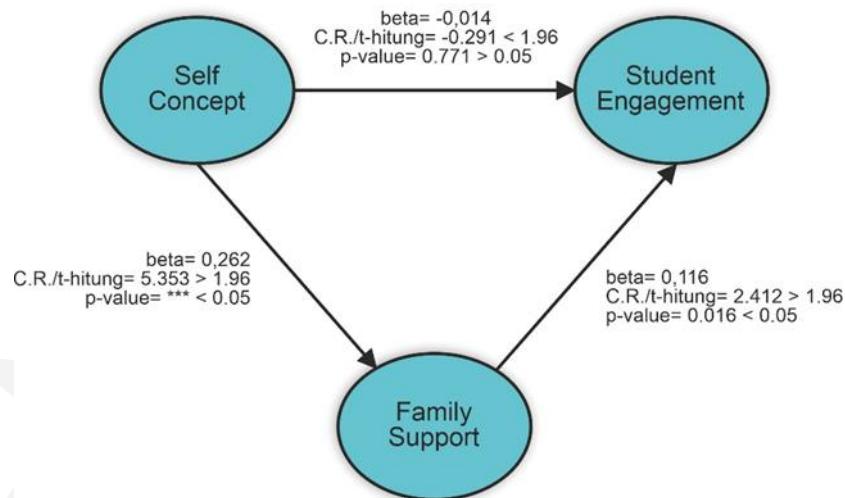
RESULT

Hypothesis testing was conducted statistically to examine the influence of self-concept on family support, the influence of family support on student engagement, the direct influence of self-concept on student engagement, and the influence of self-concept on student engagement with family support as a mediating variable to observe the mediating effect. Partial hypothesis testing utilized a Critical Ratio (C.R.) value of ≥ 1.96 at a significance level of 0.05 (5%). If the CR value is ≥ 1.96 , then H_1 is accepted, and H_0 is rejected. Hypothesis testing was also performed using Significance Probability (Sig. P). If the Sig. P result is ≤ 0.05 , then H_1 is accepted, and reject H_0 . If the Sig. P value has ***, then the hypothesis is significant at the 0.01 (1%) level. In this study, the testing of hypotheses 1 through 3 can be observed in Table 2.

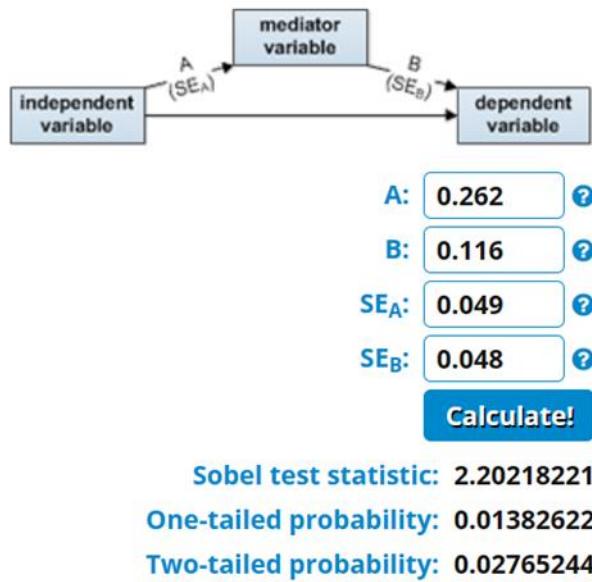
Table 2. Regression weights model fit

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p
Family_Support	<---	Self_Concept	.262	.049	5.353	***
Student_Engagement	<---	Self_Concept	-.014	.049	-.291	.771
Student_Engagement	<---	Family_Support	.116	.048	2.412	.016

Diagrammatically, the results of the partial testing of hypotheses 1 through 3 can be observed in Figure 1 as follows:

**Figure 1.** Test path diagram

Further testing of the influence of self-concept on student engagement through family support as a mediating variable will be conducted using the Sobel Test analysis. Sobel analysis, or Sobel test, is an approach to test the significance of mediation with the bootstrapping technique (a non-parametric approach that assumes variable distribution and can be applied to small sample sizes). The Sobel test analysis is one of the methods used to test the significance of mediating variables (Ghozali, 2018). The Sobel test analysis entails that if the z-value in absolute terms is > 1.96 or the statistical significance z (p-value) is < 0.05 , it indicates the indirect effect or the indirect influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediator (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The data processing output using the Sobel Test Calculator by Danielsoper on the website can be found at: [Free Sobel Test Calculator for the Significance of Mediation-Free Statistics Calculators (danielsoper.com)](<https://www.danielsoper.com/statcalc/calculator.aspx?id=28>).



Independent variable: Self-concept (SC)
 Mediator variable: Family support (FS)
 Dependent variable: Student engagement (SE)

A: The direction of the influence of the independent variable on the mediating variable
 B: The direction of influence of mediator variables on dependent variables."
 SE: Standard error

Figure 2. Sobel test

Based on the data analysis of this study, it was found that self-concept has a significant and positive influence on family support, with a computed t-value of 5.353, which is greater than 1.96, or a p-value indicated as *** (0.000) < 0.05. Therefore, self-concept is one of the variables that can enhance students' family support.

Furthermore, the data analysis revealed that family support significantly and positively impacts student engagement, with a computed t-value of 2.412, which exceeds 1.96, and a p-value of 0.016 < 0.05. Consequently, family support is one of the variables that can improve student engagement. Moreover, the data analysis indicated that self-concept does not affect student engagement, with a computed t-value of -0.291 < 1.96 and a p-value of 0.771 > 0.05. Thus, it is concluded that self-concept has no impact on student engagement.

Lastly, in the data analysis of this study, it was identified that self-concept affects student engagement with family support as a mediating variable. Through the Sobel test for Hypothesis 4, the Sobel test statistic value of 2.202 > 1.96 was obtained, with a p-value (two-tailed) of 0.02 < 0.05.

DISCUSSION

This study examines self-concept's role in Muslim students' engagement, with family support as a mediating variable. The findings align with the analysis conducted by Mukaromah et al. (2018), indicating that students' self-concept regarding the level of task or material difficulty they face can influence their learning behavior; students with a strong self-concept tend to work harder to complete tasks or understand materials. Based on research findings consistent with a study by Brown Geoffrey L. et al. (2019), which suggests that temperamental children can influence the dyadic parenting of their parents. Since temperament is related to self-concept, a child with a negative self-concept can affect family support.

The study findings revealed that family support significantly and positively influences student engagement. This discovery aligns with the views expressed by Reeve and Tseng (2011), stating that student engagement is a behavior that focuses attention, effort, persistence, interest, and enthusiasm toward tasks. Student engagement can also alleviate emotional and behavioral issues such as anger, anxiety, and boredom. On the other hand, Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong (2008) highlighted the importance of student engagement in the learning environment, attributing it as a primary cause for many individuals feeling bored, unmotivated, or entirely disinterested in the learning process, which ultimately leads to disengagement from academic aspects and social life environments within the learning process. These research outcomes contradict the research hypothesis proposed and some previous studies, such as those by Joseph Terence W. (2009), Galugu & Samsinar (2019), and Abdillah (2011), which assert that self-concept significantly influences student engagement.

Based on the data analysis of this research, it was found that self-concept influences student engagement with family support as a mediating variable. The findings of this study are in line with or support the opinions of several previous studies, including one by Skinner et al. in Handelsman et al. (2005), which states that student engagement can be demonstrated when students can engage with their school, allowing them to exhibit levels of attention, effort, persistence, positive emotions, and commitment in their learning process. Students' engagement with their school can be a significant predictor for maintaining motivation and commitment in their academic performance at the university level (Shernoff et al., 2003). Conversely, suppose students are unable to engage with their school. In that case, they are likely to experience failure in obtaining good grades, not passing courses, or not receiving other direct rewards associated with success in school tasks (Davis & McPartland, 2012). In the long term, issues with student engagement can lead to dropping out of school (Reschly & Christenson, 2012).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the influence of self-concept on student engagement, with family support acting as a mediating variable. Student engagement manifests when students can engage with the school, enabling them to display levels of attention, effort, persistence, positive emotions, and commitment in their learning processes. On the other hand, student engagement is influenced by the supportive relationship between parents and students, as parents' presence can have a positive impact on social competence and other developmental outcomes, which are certainly influenced by a stable and strong bond between parents and children from birth through adolescence and into adulthood. Students who receive support from their families may need help to develop their self-concept effectively. The significance of the role of parents lies in their ability to enhance students' self-concept, as students consistently feel supported and advocated for by their parents. With a positive self-concept and intensive parental guidance, students are more likely to be diligent and enthusiastic in their studies because they understand that both they and their parents aspire for their advancement. Influenced by self-concept and family support, good student engagement is essential for fostering student behaviors that concentrate attention, effort, perseverance, interest, and enthusiasm toward tasks.

DECLARATION

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Author contribution statement

Trisni Adelia contributed to the research design, data collection, scale distribution, analysis of research findings, and manuscript writing. Hasanuddin assisted with and approved the research design development, overseeing the data collection process and evaluating the results and manuscript. Amanah Surbakti assisted in preparing the research design, monitoring the data collection process, distributing research scales, providing input on theoretical discussions, reviewing the results, and writing the manuscript.

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Data access statement

The data described in this article can be accessed by contacting the first author.

Declaration of Interest's statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Additional information

No additional information is available for this article.

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