

# Developing Junior High School Self-Esteem through the Solution Focused Brief Counseling Approach during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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## Abstract

The occurrence of the Covid-19 pandemic around the world creates new normality in all aspects of human life. One of them is the implementation of educational activities that are carried out through online learning. This research was conducted using the Microsoft Teams application. This research aims to see the effectiveness of the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach to develop self-esteem for students at Don Bosco 3 Junior High School, Cikarang, Bekasi, Indonesia for the 2020/2021 school year. In particular, the development stage will be: Establishing Relationships; Identifying Complaints That Can Be Resolved; Goal Setting; Designing and Implementing Interventions; and Termination, Evaluation, and Follow Up. The method used was a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group. Population 142 people. The sample was taken by purposive sampling technique as many as 11 people with low self-score assessment criteria. The Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach is effective for developing students' self-esteem.

**Keywords:** *Self-Esteem, Solution-Focused Brief Counseling, Student.*

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## 1. Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic that occurred globally was also experienced by the country of Indonesia. Indonesia officially announced its first case on March 2, 2021. Exactly one week after it was announced by the government, the mass media explained that there had been the spread of covid-19 to more than 100 countries (Kompas, 2020). This shows how fast this virus is spreading. This situation implies a change in educational settings, especially the implementation of face-to-face learning. Responding to this situation the Minister of Education and Culture (Mendikbud) issued circular number 3 of 2020 concerning the prevention of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) in education units. Subsequently, circular number 6 of 2020 concerning the implementation of learning in the even semester of the 2020/2021 academic year was issued. The existence of this circular has implications for the implementation of online learning both at secondary and higher education institutions. This research was conducted in secondary schools in the form of group counseling which was carried out online using Microsoft Teams to fulfill health protocols.

Junior high school students are seen from the stage of development into adolescence. Adolescence is a transition from childhood to adulthood. During this period, adolescents undergo physiological, cognitive, affective, and socio-emotional transitions. One aspect of development that needs attention is the development of self-esteem. Self-

esteem is an important aspect in shaping adolescent personality. The choice of adolescent subjects is also related to the longitudinal study of Erol & Orth (2011) which explains that in adolescence, self-esteem increases significantly regardless of gender. Santrock (2012) describes self-esteem as a method used by a person to evaluate the ideal self and real self. Furthermore, Coopersmith & Mead, 1967 revealed that self-esteem is the result of an individual's assessment of himself and self-esteem is also a reflection of the respect of others for him (Widodo & Pratitis, 2013). Finally, self-esteem is also the notion of self globally which refers to the overall self-evaluation as an individual or how people feel about themselves in a comprehensive sense (Verkuyten, 2003).

Several facts about the importance of self-esteem in the life series of adolescents have been revealed, among others; Gustiana's (2017) explains that the lower the self-esteem of adolescents, the higher the level of delinquency. Furthermore, Dewi (2018) revealed that the higher self-esteem, the lower the tendency for impulsive buying to adolescents. Finally, Irawati & Hajat (2012) revealed that there is a significant and positive correlation between the correlation between self-esteem and learning achievement. The higher the self-esteem, the higher the learning achievement. This shows that self-esteem is related to behavior and is related to aspects of human life.

A preliminary study conducted by researchers in grades VII, VIII, and IX of SMP Don Bosco III which is located at Jln. Sentosa Raya/Taman Sentosa, Pasirsari, Cikarang Selatan, Bekasi, West Java Province revealed through the Self-Esteem Level questionnaire, obtained data; students who have Self-Esteem in the Very High category 5% (7 Students), High category 41.5% (59 Students), Medium category 45.8% (65 Students), Low Category 5.6% (8 Students), and the Very Low category gets a percentage of 2.1% (3 students). This empirical fact shows that the self-esteem profile of Don Bosco Middle School students is not yet at an optimal level, so there is still potential to be developed. The trend in the level of self-esteem that has not reached the optimal level is characterized by inactive behavior, lack of confidence, and even inability to express themselves. The empirical data above also indicates the need for guidance and counseling service activities that function to develop self-esteem, so that students have an optimal level of self-esteem.

Henderson (2005) mentions several principles of guidance and counseling programs in schools, including: as a developmental dimension, in which children and adolescents need to be helped to achieve goals in accordance with tasks at their age related to academic, career and private-social; benefit from the design of interventions to foster their development (academic, career and social-personal); A qualified school counselor will contribute to the development of children and adolescents; School counselors can design and provide interventions related to student needs in the context of prevention and remedial, thereby closing the gap between certain groups of students and their peers; Interventions provided by school counselors in academic, career and social-personal development can help students acquire and apply skills, attitudes, and knowledge to promote development in the three dimensions of student growth and development, the work of school counselors should be organized in a program (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006).

Researchers have carried out self-esteem development strategies, among others; (Marhani et. Al., 2018) regarding the Effectiveness of Self-Talk Training to Increase Self-Esteem of Teenagers Victims of Bullying show that the results of self-talk are effective in increasing teen self-esteem. Furthermore, research (Maharani, et. al, 2018) on Increasing Self-Esteem in Underachiever Students through Group Counseling Services has been shown to be effective in increasing student self-esteem. Research on increasing self-esteem through creative counseling has not been found. Seeing the importance of self-esteem in the life series of adolescents, it is deemed necessary to find the right strategy to develop youth self-esteem. The counseling activities in this study specifically use creative counseling strategies through the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach. Counseling is the heart of guidance because counseling assistance is more directly related to individual needs and problems, even though it takes place in a group setting (Kartadinata, 2007).

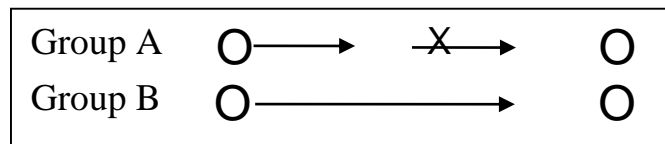
Creative counseling has several advantages including making the concept more real, increasing awareness, characterizing something, accelerating the counseling process. To increase learning, because humans are visual learners, increasing learning because humans learn through experience, focusing sessions. Furthermore, Solution Focused Brief Counseling has advantages, among others, this approach emphasizes the short time of counseling, this approach is flexible and has a lot of research that proves its effectiveness, this approach is positive to be used with different counselees, this approach is focused on change and a basic rationale emphasizes small changes in behavior, and this approach can be combined with other counseling approaches.

The group setting was chosen because of several advantages (Hartinah, 2009), describes some of the benefits obtained by implementing group counseling; first, individuals who experience problems can get to know themselves through group friends (individuals can compare their potential with others); second, positive attitudes of children can be developed (tolerance, mutual respect, cooperation, responsibility, discipline, creativity); third, through the group the elimination of moral burdens (shame, selfishness, spoilage, aggressiveness); fourth, through the group the elimination of emotional tensions, conflicts, disappointments, suspicion, jealousy; Fifth, through groups, the spirit of life in completing tasks can be developed, the emergence of helping attitudes, discipline, and other social attitudes. Based on the description above, the purpose of this study is to find (1) the profile of the level of student self-esteem; (2) Description of the effectiveness of a solution focused brief counseling approach to develop students' self-esteem.

## **2. Method**

This study uses a quasi-experimental method, which involves the experimental and control groups and determines the participants by means of a non-random assignment, namely the determination of participants according to certain criteria to be examined into the two groups (Creswell, 2014). The design used is the non-equivalent control groups

design. This design uses a treatment group and a comparison group that is compared using pre-test and post-test measures (Creswell, 2010, p. 242).



**Figure 1 Quasi Experiment Using Nonrandom Assignment**

Source: Creswell (2014, p.231)

Info:

Group A = Experiment Group

Group B = Control Group

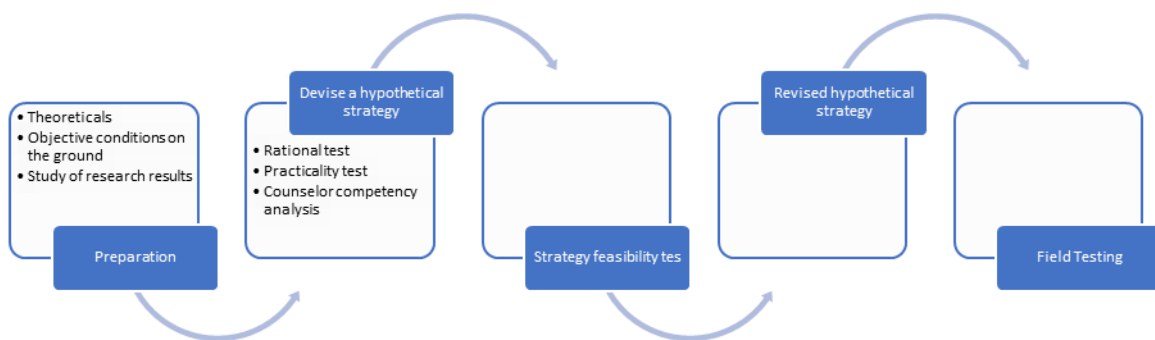
X = Represents a group in certain events or experimental variables

O = Representing the process of observation or measurement with instruments research

The use of a control group that does not get treatment from researchers with the consideration that participants in the control group are assumed to be looking for another "treatment" anywhere (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 2008).

### 3. Results and Discussion

Below is the development flow of the Solution Focused Brief Counseling Approach to develop Student Self-Esteem:



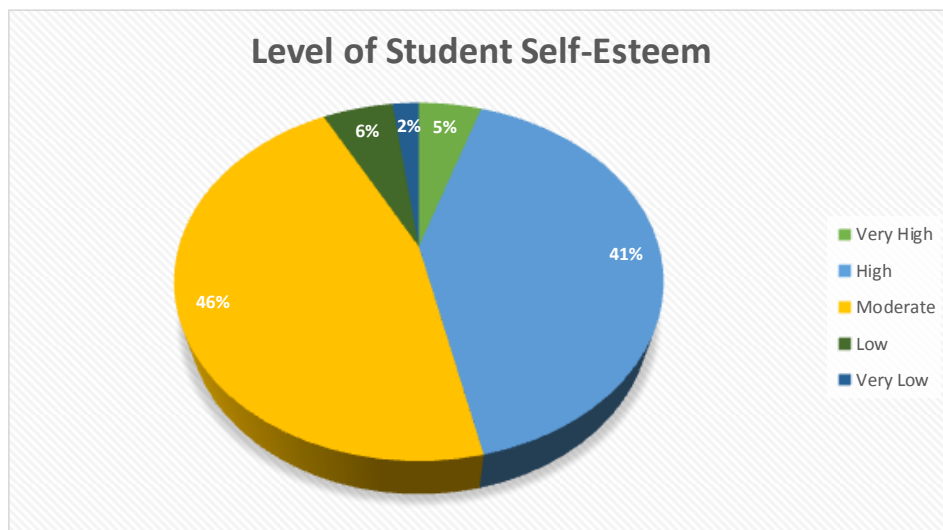
**Figure 2 Process Flow of Solution Focused Brief Counseling Approach Development for Developing Self-Esteem**

The hypothetical formulation is based on the opinion of Seligman (2006) which contains 5 stages of activities, among others (1) Establishing Relationship (Building Good Relationships); (2) Identifying a solvable complaint; (3) Establishing goals; (4) Designing and Implementing Intervention (Designing and Defining Interventions); (5) Termination, Evaluation and Follow-up (Mulawarman, 2014, p. 70). In this study, 1 stage was added, namely the Self-Esteem Disclosure at the beginning of the stage. This group counseling

practice supports changes in the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of all counseling participants. Group activities through the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach include listening, discussing, giving each other positive feedback so that they can have an influence on the development of students' self-esteem. This is supported by the opinion of Harris & Orth (2019) which explains that social relations and levels of self-esteem are interrelated and have an effect.

Stage 1 (Self-Esteem Disclosure)

Profiles of the level of self-esteem of students in grades VII, VIII, and IX SMP DON BOSCO T.A. 2020/2021 is revealed through the Self-Esteem Level questionnaire, which is structured based on the following aspects: power, significance, competence, and virtue (Coopersmith, 1967). The questionnaire produced 46 statement items. The results of empirical trials on all 142 students showed that the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient was 0.914. Based on a review of the results of the calculation of the reliability coefficient on the Guilford criteria (Masidjo, 1995, p. 209), it can be concluded that the instrument reliability coefficient falls into the very high criteria. From the results of the disclosure using the questionnaire, it was obtained data from students who had Self-esteem in the Very High category 5% (7 students), the High category was 41.5% (59 students), the Medium category was 45.8% (65 students), the Low Category 5 , 6% (8 students), and the Very Low category got a percentage of 2.1% (3 students).



**Graphic 1 Don Bosco Middle School Students' Self-Esteem Level**

The data above shows that the level of self-esteem of grade VII, VIII and IX SMP Don Bosco III Cikarang Academic Year 2020/2021 is mostly in the high (41.5%) and medium (45.8%) category. Students in the low (5.60%) and very low (2.10%) categories are used as references as research treatment subjects. In the process of disclosing problems through the group counseling process, several new data were obtained, namely an overview of the problems faced by the counselee. In general, the problems found by the majority relate to various personal and social fields. These problems include; first, related to

physical discomfort they have. Research (Wangge & Hartini, 2013) the higher self-acceptance, the higher self-esteem in adolescents. This implies, the lower the individual's self-acceptance, the lower his self-esteem will be. Second, the lack of attention from the family and the difficulty of the counselee to adapt to the peer group environment. Social factors that come from family and peers greatly affect the level of individual self-esteem. A person with high self-esteem will be more active in seeking social experiences that will improve their appearance in the social environment (Savitri & Hartati, 2018). Limited individual interaction with the people around them will have implications, namely hindering individuals in develop attitudes and views about himself.

#### Stage 2 (Establishing Relationship)

At this stage the researcher builds closeness and trust towards students, through introductory activities, games, and questions and answers. The objectives at this stage include: (1) group counseling participants understand and carry out the group commitments that have been made; (2) facilitating group members to get to know each other so that they can share experiences constructively in each session; (3) determine the theme and goals of the group; and (4) help group members understand themselves.

#### Stage 3 (identifying a solvable complaint)

At this stage the researcher invites students to identify the problem that is being experienced and find a solution. This helps students to be aware of the background to the problem they are experiencing.

#### Stage 4 (establishing goals)

At this stage the researcher uses the miracle question technique to explore the counselee's goals for the problem at hand.

#### Stage 5 (designing and implementing intervention)

At this stage the researcher uses the exception technique to help students find other points of view or the strengths that exist in him when he is experiencing problems. In addition, supporting activities were also added as follows:

- a. Force Bombardment Activities. The activity instructions are as follows: Each student in turn selects another student to be the target of the force bombardment; Each student mentions at least 1 positive thing in the target student (traits, habits, achievements, etc.); Continue onward until all members have the opportunity to be the target of the activity. This activity aims to explore positive things in students both good traits / habits, certain skills and achievements that have been achieved. This is in line with the opinion (APA, 2020) which emphasizes the activities of exploring strengths, achievements, positive things in a student who has low self-esteem.

- b. Screening of several videos about the importance of honesty, the importance of positive thinking, an inspirational story of a person with a disability, and a motivational video when experiencing feelings of worthlessness.

Stage 6 (termination, evaluation and follow-up)

At this stage the researcher uses the scaling technique to understand how the current condition of the counselee is. For example: from the interval 1-10, where the number 10 is very disturbed and 1 feels calm, comfortable, then on what scale / number are you in your current condition?

**Table 1 Quotation of the Results of the Counseling Process at Several Stages**

Participants	Stage 3		Stage 5	Stage 6
	Problem Conversation	Solution Conversation		
Subject 1	"I was often teased physically by friends and family, which made me sad and reluctant to socialize."	"Basically I have something that no one else has that I shouldn't be ashamed of having."	"I have a family who is willing to listen to my story and I also feel strong enough to face the problems that exist"	8 to 2
Subject 2	"I feel unrecognized by my family and it makes me feel lonely"	"Actually, my family thinks of me, but they don't know how to express their love and affection for me, which should be the same between family members."	"Even though my family doesn't really care about me, I still have friends who care."	10 to 1
Subject 3	"I thought that I was of no use to my class"	"So that I feel" useful "in class I will remind friends who make noise in the class and remind other friends to join the class immediately when class has started."	"I was able to deal with all the problems", "I spent my time during the Pandemic developing my talent for music and video editing skills."	8 to 3
Subject 4	"I feel like my friends don't care and respond to what I say"	"Basically I need to adapt to friends, so that I can follow the conversation according to the topic being discussed."	"I have a beloved mother who always cares about me and is willing to listen to my story"	7 to 1

**Table 2 Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Before	106.36	11	15.200	4.583
	After	140.18	11	22.877	6.898

The SPSS output above shows a summary of the descriptive statistics of the two samples studied, namely before treatment (pre-test) and after treatment (post-test). The average value before is 106.36 and after 140.18. Because the average value before treatment is 106.36 < after treatment is 140.18, it can be concluded that there is a difference in the average results before treatment and after treatment.



**Table 3 Paired Samples Correlations**

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Before & After	11	-.003	.992

Based on the data above, the correlation value is obtained - .003. This value means that there is a negative correlation, namely the existence of a correlation between two variables running in opposite, contradictory or vice versa directions. A negative correlation occurs when two or more variables run opposite, which means that if variable X increases, variable Y experiences a decrease or vice versa. If variable X has decreased, variable Y has increased.

**Table 4 Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	<b>Before – After</b>	-33.818	27.509	8.294	-52.299	-15.337	-4.077	10	.002

Hypothesis formulation:

Ho = There is no average difference between the level of self-esteem before treatment and after treatment. This means that there is no effect on the implementation of the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach to develop students' self-esteem.

Ha = There is an average difference between the level of self-esteem before treatment and after treatment. This means that there is an effect of implementing the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach to develop students' self-esteem.

Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted if the value is Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05. Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected if the value is Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05. The results show Sig. (2-tailed) 0.002 < 0.05, then Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. So it can be concluded that there is an average difference between the level of self-esteem of students before treatment and after treatment, which means that there is an effect of implementing a solution focused brief counseling approach to develop students' self-respect. The results of this study are in line with the research of Franklin, C., Moore, K., & Hopson, L. (2008) which states that the Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach is effective in dealing with problems experienced by students in a school environment. Based on counseling conversations, it is known that the problems that arise in students include experiencing verbal bullying by friends, feeling unacknowledged by their existence (feeling neglected), having tough rivals in academia, not having confidence in their physical abilities, being slandered by his friend, and felt himself useless. Furthermore, Mulawarman's (2010) research on the application of solution-focused brief therapy to increase the self-esteem of high school students also



shows positive results in increasing student self-esteem. These two opinions further strengthen the research results that have been obtained.

#### 4. Conclusions

The majority of students in grades VII, VIII, and IX SMP Don Bosco 3 Cikarang Academic Year 2020/2021 have a tendency for price levels to be in the high and medium category with a percentage of 41.5% and 45.8%. The solution focused brief counseling approach is effective for developing student self-esteem which includes aspects of power, significance, competence, and virtue. The results of this study can be used as material for developing a counseling study with a solution focused brief counseling approach, especially in preparing counseling activities to develop self-esteem in junior high school students. Involving stake holders (teachers and parents) in activities.

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