**Research article**

# EMPOWERING A SUPPORTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION LEARNING CULTURE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' SOCIAL SELF-ESTEEM

*UDC 796.01:316.7:159.923.5*

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**Abstract**. *Physical education is a subject that requires students to perform openly in public. It seems a more critical way because it needs feedback from teachers and classmates. Many students experience a crisis in social self-esteem because of negligence in their performance. This study aims to test the determination of teacher and classmate support for students' social self-esteem. The participants were 94 junior high school students, grade 7 (M = 12.7660; SD = 0.53733). We collected the data using The Teacher and Classmate Support Scale and Social Self-Esteem Inventory. The data were analyzed descriptively and with the t-test. The results of teacher and classmate support and students' social self-esteem variables show positive results, as well as proving that teacher and classmate support affects students' social self-esteem during physical education learning activities. The presence of teachers in the learning class is necessary to provide social, emotional, and cognitive support to students so that they become more confident in performing their abilities and also feel comfortable with every performance they produce in some learning experiences and expressive learning cultures.*

**Key words**: *Physical education culture, teacher support, classmate support, social self-esteem*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The learning process is an action taken by teachers and students to achieve goals. In this sense, learning is a process that helps students to be more optimal in using their reasoning, psycho-social abilities and skills. Learning activities should help students to recognize and explore their potential and competencies through various approaches, models, methods, and learning strategies (Blegur, Mae, & Souisa, 2018). It has to be the

reason for the teacher to carry out learning to help students strive and change to be more constructive and productive during and after completing the learning process. Also, the teacher is responsible for formulating student subject matter, selective in determining learning methods and strategies, dynamic in organizing classroom learning, as well as being a humanist and supportive when providing feedback and evaluating student performance and the learning outcomes. Teachers need to pay attention to all these segments in a holistic and balanced manner so that students learn in an atmosphere that is motivational, active, participatory, expressive, and joyful because such learning behavior is the initial capital for students to succeed in learning.

One of the most important human traits for achieving goals is self-esteem (Doodman, Zadeh, & Changizi, 2017), because self-esteem is related to performance (Nyarko, 2017), and student success (Duraku & Hoxha, 2018). So in communicating and interacting, the teacher needs to protect the human rights that students have by not applying punishment during the disciplinary process and so on. Physical and social punishment that teachers implement will only increase aggression, antisocial behavior, low relationship quality, depression, and lack of moral internalization of students (Smith, 2006). Teachers should appreciate students' effort and offer various solutions if students do not complete their tasks, not punish and intimidate students with verbal and physical violence that makes them feel unworthy in front of others. Whether the teacher is aware or not, every social interaction is related to student self-esteem (Widodo & Pratitis, 2013). When teachers respond to students' work with negative feedback or verbal abuse, it will break the development of the self-esteem, emotional well-being, and physical condition of students (Noh & Talaat, 2012). The reason is that this feedback is a form of "legitimization" that students are not better than their classmates. When teachers or classmates bully each other, there is an invasion of privacy that can damage the psycho-social development of students in learning; even its culmination can trigger tension among fellow students.

Besides the parents, teachers and classmates are also the main models for developing student self-esteem with verbal and non-verbal feedback that is friendly, supportive, and constructive. At the same time, teachers and classmates can also undermine students' self-esteem with sarcastic, destructive, and intimidating feedback (Mackowicz, 2013). Giving negative feedback in learning activities can damage the development of student self-esteem (Ickes, Wicklund, & Ferris, 1973). Self-esteem contributes positively to one's moral intelligence (Mulkam, 2016). If students have negative self-esteem, they will also have negative moral intelligence. For instance, students are not prepared to receive negative feedback (Brockner, Derr, & Laing, 1987), to respond to destructive failure (Shrauger & Rosenberg, 1970), they have low assertiveness (Ginting & Masykur, 2014), are easily exposed to negative pressure from the environment (Hidayat, 2013), suffer from high emotional distress (Brown, 2009) and projected levels of depression (Orth, Robins, & Roberts, 2008; Aditomo & Retnowati, 2014; Manna, Falgares, Ingoglia, Como, & Santis, 2016; Babore, Trumello, Candelori, Paciello, & Cerniglia, 2016).

Social support from parents, teachers, and classmates are important for students' psycho-social and academic development. Previous studies have proved by providing information about the importance of teacher support for student life satisfaction (Guess & McCane-Bowling, 2013), student learning achievement (Yu & Singh, 2016; Sharma, 2016), as well as students' academic emotions (Lei, Cui, & Chiu, 2018). The results of the study by Lei et al. also strengthen the strong correlation between teacher support and student academic emotions, in which East Asian students have higher academic emotion

than Western European and American students because East Asian teacher support is more felt by students (Lei, Cui, & Chiu, 2018). Besides social support, there are four counseling strategies offered to improve students' self-esteem, but they are still limited to conceptual ideas. These strategies are to recognize values, stop dangerous thought patterns, start learning new thinking patterns, and be patient (Bruno & Njoku, 2014). In particular, Hein & Caune (2014) conducted a study on the social support of physical education teachers for student self-esteem, where physical self-esteem is present through satisfaction for autonomy and motivational behavior.

Students' emotional symptoms are not only influenced by teacher support but also by classmate support (Demaray, Malecki, Davidson, Hodgson, & Rebus, 2005). If students treat others badly, then they will experience unstable emotional symptoms. For example, teenagers in America give bad ratings to classmates because they get bad treatment from classmates (Pisula & Lukowska, 2011). Other research also shows the importance of relationships between classmates for students' positive adjustment because the social function perceived by classmates is associated with fluctuations in self-esteem (Nelis & Bukowski, 2019); social support from classmates is a significant antecedent variable for student self-esteem. It reduces levels of depression and helps students to be pleased by promoting positive emotions (Bum & Jeon, 2016). Previous studies have not provided empirical evidence of teacher social support for students' social self-esteem in physical education learning activities. For this reason, the research confirms the direction of the teacher social support study (such as treating students fairly and being kind and friendly to students and others) and classmate support toward student self-esteem during physical education learning.

## 2. Material and Methods

### 2.1. Participants

The participants involved were 94 students, grade 7, 42 males (44.7%) and 52 females (55.3%) (M = 12.7660; SD = 0.53733). The participants were determined using proportional stratified random sampling using the norms of Krejcie & Morgan (1990) from a population of 185 students. The participants were divided into class A, 15 students, class B, 16 students, class C, 16 students, class D, 16 students, class, E 15 students, and class F, 16 students.

### 2.2. Measuring instrument

We collected data on teacher and classmate support using The Teacher and Classmate Support Scale (TTCS) created by Torsheim, World, and Samdal in 2000. This scale was developed from 2 main indicators; *teacher support* which has a reliability value of 0.69 and *classmate support* which has a reliability value of 0.74. One statement included in the TTCS is "*Our teachers treat us fairly* and *Most of the students in my class are kind and helpful*." Further, we collected data on the students' social self-esteem using the Social Self-Esteem Inventory of Lawson, Marshall, and McGrath in 1979. Formerly this scale consisted of 30 statement items with a reliability value of 0.88. However, in 2013, the Social Self-Esteem Inventory (SSEI) was simplified and retested by Kerla and Repišti by involving 185 adolescents, with a reliability value of 0.837, and the Guttman split-half value of 0.853. SSEI was modified on a 5-point Likert scale. Some of the statements in

the SSEI are "*I can really make other people feel good in my presence* dan *I am good at holding people's attention and interest.*"

### 2.3. Data analysis

Descriptive analysis is used to profile teacher and classmate support as well as student social self-esteem, while simple linear regression analysis is used to measure the magnitude of the prediction of the variable teacher and peer support on student self-esteem. The t-test (independent sample t-test) was also used to see the difference between indicators of teacher support and indicators of classmate support on students' social self-esteem. All statistical tests were calculated using the SPSS program. If the sig value is less than 0.05, then there is an influence between the teacher and classmate support variables on student self-esteem, and there is a difference between teacher support and classmate support on student self-esteem.

### 3. RESULTS

### 3.1. Descriptive analysis

We need to categorize the two research variables, so we use descriptive analysis. Each variable is categorized into five segment: very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor (see table 1).

**Table 1** Description analysis

| Teacher and classmate support | | Category | Social self-esteem | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| F | % | | F | % |
| 53 | 56.38 | Very good | 34 | 36.17 |
| 31 | 32.97 | Good | 26 | 27.65 |
| 10 | 10.63 | Fair | 29 | 30.85 |
| 0 | 0 | Poor | 5 | 5.31 |
| 0 | 0 | Very poor | 0 | 0 |
| | 33.43 | Mean | 33.38 | |
| | 4.791 | Std. deviation | 7.100 | |

Table 1 proves that students who responded to the teacher and classmate support questionnaire are "very good" with a percentage value of 56.38. As adolescents, students still need support from teachers and classmates to "legitimize" their existence in learning. Also, they prefer to be treated fairly, kindly, and honestly so that they can reform various potentials to develop more active and expressive physical education learning activities. The presence of teachers and classmates should establish them as guides, helpers, and supporters for students to learn how to avoid negligence. The enrichment of various literature on teacher and classmate support is required to ensure the varied social engineering practices that teachers and classmates practice in learning activities referring to supportive learning cultures. The "very good" trend also applies to the student social self-esteem variable with a percentage value of 36.17. Teacher and classmate support also marks the level of acceptance of students during their learning environment, including feelings of pleasure, being missed, as well as relying on each other for the learning connection in particular tasks. They will be more confident in expressing themselves through their reasoning, attitudes, and performance during learning.

### 3.2. Regression analysis

After doing a descriptive analysis, the researcher conducted a regression test (t-test). This test aims to see the direction of determination between the variables. This test will provide positive or negative influence evidence as well as the significance level of the two variables.

**Table 2** Regression analysis

| Model | Unstandardized coefficients | t | Sig | R Square | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 5.504 | - | - | - | - |
| teacher and classmate support | 0.834 | 6.531 | 0.000 | 0.317 | Positive and Significant |

The results of statistical testing (see table 2) show that there is a positive and significant influence between teacher and classmate support on students' social self-esteem. This decision is proven through the t-value which is greater than the t-table value (6.531) with a sig value (2-tailed) that is smaller than 0.05 (0.000). Meanwhile, the contribution of teacher and peer support to students' social self-esteem was 0.317. Thus, educators and peers must be able to empower and project supportive learning activities. For example, by treating students in a friendly and fair manner, assisting when students need help, creating togetherness among fellow students, showing social acceptance, and empathizing with fellow students, students feel more comfortable and valuable in expressing themselves during learning without feeling "threatened" by various performances.

## 4. DISCUSSION

Teacher and classmate support is influential in physical education learning. The main reason is that in physical education learning, the performance of students is manifested clearly in some skills, while it is not very visible for other subjects. Students who have a poor performance may feel embarrassed by peers who have a good performance for these skills are practiced before the audience. The situation will threaten the whole learning atmosphere. If teachers and classmates respond to this performance explicitly, then open comparisons will happen among fellow students. But in fact, teachers should reduce negligence and disparity in students so that they remain enthusiastic during learning. Does negligence need to be corrected? Yes, it needs to be improved, but it must be managed in a more educational way, in which the focus of the improvement is on the students' performance, not the students. Besides, teachers need to prioritize aspects of humanization by first providing support for the works the students produce and for other improvements students need. Thus, when a student needs help from the teacher, he must get it because only the help and support they need to overcome their negligence during learning prevents students from falling for the negligence they did once.

The teacher's fair attitude in treating students is a form of support. The teacher does not differentiate between skilled and unskilled students. All students still treat the teacher well, including giving the same opportunity to demonstrate certain motion tasks. Although in other cases, the skilled students can serve as learning models. However, fair treatment is needed in order to stimulate students so that they indirectly feel they have the ability to do so, although it is not as maximal as the need for certain skill standards.

Students will feel precious because they are welcomed in learning activities by getting equal opportunities. In certain cases, teachers significantly discriminate the unskilled and skilled students in terms of giving opportunities. Teachers seem to close the opportunity for other students to participate, which will lead students to the conclusion that they are being treated unfairly. Physical education learning must provide opportunities for students to move, demonstrate, socialize, express, collaborate, and so forth through physical activities. Thus, support with fair treatment during student movement activities is needed so that they have more opportunities for transformation, while at the same time fostering a sense of self-confidence in front of teachers and classmates.

If we look at the four competency standards for a teacher applied in Indonesia, one of the competencies teachers need to have in carrying out learning is personality competence. According to Blegur, Wasak, & Manu (2017), some of the important indicators in this competency are behaving fairly, friendly, and patiently. Teachers certainly realize that there are a few stories that can stimulate their emotions when carrying out learning. But, as a professional, the teacher must not let these emotions dominate him. Some students do not maximally fulfill or achieve learning objectives; of course, this is disappointing because the teacher is responsible for leading students to achieve learning goals. On the other hand, in a more limited scope, some students do not follow teacher instructions, have low-performance on a task, are unwilling to participate, and so on. Students are unique with their various acts and behaviors, but teachers must still treat them friendly because students only want to be appreciated, accepted, and loved while in the classroom. The negligence of students needs stimulation from the teacher from within by providing support with hospitality, the right treatment, and upholding the learning rights for every student.

Social support has implications for physical (Reblin & Uchino, 2008) and psychological health because social support can moderate genetic and environmental vulnerabilities and provide resistance to stress (Ozbay, Johnson, Dimoulas, Morgan, Charney, & Southwick, 2007). However, research conducted by Eagle et al. showed that one should think about increasing perceptions of social support, either through cognitive framing or positive mental health interventions (Eagle, Hybels, & Proeschold-Bell, 2018). When students feel welcome in the class, then there will be a nuance of solidarity. They are attracted to help each other, not for racial reasons, but more in the aspect of support. If students get support, they will be pleased to share information as well as be involved in togetherness activities inside and outside the classroom. If we look at several cases of bullying that have occurred in the world of education and learning recently, they seem to have occurred due to a loss of support behavior among students. Giving attention only to students who are learning is a real sign of support. There is no need for teachers and colleagues to overthink the material but pay attention to the balance of opportunity, care, and even motivation of students as long as they need it. Some phenomenal students will feel uncomfortable when they are in an unsupportive learning class. What will happen then? They leave various learning activities. For example, they do not want to work in certain groups, or they are even passive while studying particular subjects.

Students getting negative feedback or verbal abuse also interferes with the development of self-esteem, emotional well-being, and physical condition (Noh & Talaat, 2012). This condition is a traumatic experience for students who perform. Students' perceptions of teacher and classmate support will precede the various behaviors they display. If students find that their teachers and classmates support them, they will move forward and carry out movement tasks with joy and enthusiasm. So, every behavior that teachers and

classmates display during learning greatly determines students' perceptions of their behavior. Some students may get permission, medical, and even transfer letters simply because of the discomfort of studying in an intimidating, sarcastic, and destructive classroom. Blegur (2020) has also considered various inequalities in physical education learning, for example, by giving real punishments to students as a form of self-esteem irritation. Based on this, Blegur recommends the "KASIH" method namely: 1) Reduce ridicule for student performance, 2) Appreciate every effort the student has made, 3) Patiently handle every student problem, 4) Remind students of their learning goals, and 5) Avoid comparisons between students. This social self-esteem greatly determines the existence of students in their social community (including class). Therefore, if students have felt irritated regarding their self-esteem in class, they will protect themselves with various things to ensure they are not discriminated against and bullied just because of 'negligence' on certain motion tasks.

Self-esteem is also closely related to social interactions (Widodo & Pratitis, 2013:131). Therefore, teachers need to create a supportive physical education learning culture that is important for the development of students' social self-esteem (Ikiz & Cakar, 2010). One of the essential elements to achieving goals is self-esteem (Doodman, Zadeh, & Changizi, 2017). Indeed, with various engineering, the teacher helps students to achieve goals, and these goals must be transferred onto students so that after learning, students can achieve goals. Social self-esteem can be said to be an element that is currently in crisis. The reason is that various destructive practices do not only come from the internet but the "work" of the teachers themselves. Therefore, the teacher must condemn any excuses used to punish the students in the practice of physical education learning. Physical education teachers must be able to develop supportive and equal learning for every student. Akgul, Cokamay, & Demir (2012) found that teacher support is vital for personal development, academic achievement, and student welfare. Thus, the teacher must ignore the various kinds of discrimination on performance, knowledge, and attitudes the students display. Teachers, at once, are selective in observing student multiple behaviors that cause loss of their social self-esteem.

Although peers can accept students collectively in their class, some of the data showed that students with different ethnicities get different treatment. They are not accepted. It can be stimulated by previous bad acceptance experiences by classmates, which also foster the wrong perceptions of their friends as found in research by Pisula & Łukowska (2011). Teachers can start engineering various social situations for a culture of mutual support between students as an effort to fulfill student self-esteem (Hoffman, Ushpiz, & Levy-Shiff, 1988), as well as suppress parental stress levels on student learning activities (Ati, Matulessy, & Rochim, 2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

Both teachers and students need a harmonious and supportive learning climate because they are all in a transitional period trying to realize themselves through learning activities in various forms. Problems that often limit students' freedom of expression are intimidating and discriminatory learning behavior. It appears in the practice of punishment and speech so that it "kills" student expression. Physical education is very susceptible to this. Therefore, supportive behavior from teachers and classmates is highly needed to narrow racial divides among fellow students. Teachers' friendly, fair, and honest behaviors and actions are still necessary for students to maintain them in spaces of

expression and performance both inside and outside the classroom. Physical education must also pay attention to promote humanist learning. Although during practice, it closely relates to a culture of competition.

Teachers can initiate support by always rotating students in study groups across meetings to ensure different levels of student acceptance and cooperation. Because classmate support plays a strategic role in developing self-esteem, then after learning, evaluation activities must also provide a "dynamic" atmosphere so that competitive nuances are only used for certain practices, not for a wide range of things. As a heterogeneous class, the introduction of culture is also needed by teachers and colleagues so that the adaptation process in religion, culture, speech, dialect, etc. is acceptable as a plurality. Thus, social support is always carried out by anyone without having specific racial reasons. With mutual support, students are more ready to express themselves to show their totality in the physical education learning process.

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# RAZVIJANJE KULTURE UČENJA FIZIČKOG VASPITANJA KAO VID PODRŠKE RAZVIJANJU SOCIJALNOG SAMOPOUZDANJA UČENIKA

*Fizičko vaspitanje je predmet koji od učenika zahteva da budu fizički aktivni pred drugima. Može se steći utisak da je učenik u tim okolnostima podložan kritikama, jer dobija povratne informacije od nastavnika i drugih učenika. Mnogi učenici doživljavaju krizu socijalnog samopoštovanju zbog mogućih propusta u performansi. Cilj istraživanja bio je da se utvrdi nivo podrške nastavnika i drugih učenika razvijanju socijalnog samopoštovanja učenika. U istraživanju učestvovalo je 94 učenika 7 razreda osnovne škole (M = 12,7660; SD = 0,53733). Podaci su prikupljeni pomoću Skale za određivanje podrške nastavnika i drugih učenika i Inventara socijalnog samopoštovanja. Analiza podataka uključila je parametre deskriptivne statistike i t-test. Rezultati pokazuju da podrška nastavnika i drugih učenika utiče na socijalno samopoštovanje učenika tokom fizičkih aktivnosti koje se izvode za vreme časa. Neophodno je prisustvo nastavnika tokom časa kako bi se pružila socijalna, emotivna, i kognitivna podrška učenicima i razvilo njihovo samopouzdanje prilikom iskazivanja svog umeća, kao i samopouzdanje u nastavnom kontekstu i tokom izvođenja ekspresivnih aktivnosti.*

Ključne reči:    *Fizička kultura, podrška nastavnika, podrška učenika, socijalno samopoštovanje*