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### Self-Esteem and Stockholm Syndrome in Dating Violence Victims

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#### Abstract

Violence in dating relationships causes a lot of harm to the victims. It is difficult for female students as victims to realize that they have been harmed, even though they have received a lot of inappropriate treatment. This phenomenon is like an embarrassing incident, closed tightly and accepted by oneself to get the comfort of running a social life on campus. A total of 109 students who were victims of dating violence and were willing to open up were involved to reveal the role of self-esteem and the condition of Stockholm syndrome. The instrument used is a measurement scale that is relevant to the scope of violence in dating. The results of statistical calculations found a downward patterned relationship between self-esteem and Stockholm syndrome. Other results found that low self-esteem played a role in increasing the behavior of Stockholm syndrome. What are the dynamics of Stockholm syndrome such that the victim did a study that needs to be followed up in the next study? The study of the phenomenon of dating violence needs to be seen from the side of the perpetrator (male). Future research is recommended to conduct an analysis involving male respondents.

**Keywords:** Violence, Dating, Stockholm syndrome, Self-esteem, Student

#### Introduction

According to Wardhani and Indrawati (2010), dating violence is an act of violence where the act includes threats, coercion, and physical or psychological abuse that occurs in a dating relationship (Wardhani & Indrawati, 2020). Nowadays, it is often found that students are in a romantic relationship with the opposite sex, but violence occurs in their relationship, such as verbal and psychological violence. This condition seems to contradict the meaning of dating. The definition of dating is defined as a relationship between two individuals which is usually carried out with the opposite sex, to be the initial process of building a relationship before going into marriage (Nugroho & Sushanti, 2019). Based on data obtained from the National Commission for Women, cases of violence against women in 2020 in Indonesia amounted to 299,911. The number of cases of dating violence that occurred to women in 2020 reached 1,309, which experienced an increase in cases from 2019 and ranks second after cases of domestic violence (KOMNAS PEREMPUAN, 2021). The results of a survey conducted by Wijaya (2021) found that 63 of 159 student respondents reported being victims of physical violence in dating. Then it was also found that 129 respondents had experienced psychological violence. Both survey results showed a concern. Students are agents of change to solve a problem in the environment or society (Fauziah, 2016). Dating violence that occurs in students is a critical problem that must be resolved immediately so that students can be free from all acts of violence, especially violence in dating (Wahyuni et al., 2020). Stockholm syndrome is a term used to describe a psychological bond between victims and perpetrators of violence or similar conditions where there is one individual who has dominant power to endanger the

life of the victim (Fabrique et al., 2007). Stockholm syndrome is a response crisis related to psychology in the bond that is owned by both partners. This response crisis is more experienced by women (Åse, 2015). The crisis was caused by the disturbing sense of self-esteem of victims of violence being reduced. One of the things that can make the victim's self-esteem low is that the victim is often treated harshly by his partner. The treatment then escalated into threats, and demands from their partners. The self-esteem theory from Coopersmith, in a study conducted by Zahra and Yanuvianti (2019), explains self-esteem as an effort to assess and accept every condition that represents one's state.

Violence in a dating relationship can be explained through the formation of meaning regarding the relationship (Chung, (2007). For example, the attachment that is formed between the perpetrator and the victim. Preoccupied attachment style is a factor that can influence the formation of the Stockholm syndrome tendency (Yuliani & Fitria, 2017). The meaning of a relationship is very much based on the self-esteem that is formed in a relationship bond. In a dating relationship at a young age, it turns out that self-esteem obtained from a relationship turns out to also explains the occurrence of the Stockholm syndrome tendency (Abdullah, 2019). Then it is also known that acceptance of violence is a variable that can influence dating violence victimization with self-esteem (Sabrina et al., 2021).

## Research Methods

This research was conducted to obtain the facts behind the phenomenon of violence in dating. The process of collecting preliminary facts is carried out qualitatively. This initial study was conducted by interviewing five sources who have been or are currently victims of violence. Interviews were conducted to get an overview of the symptoms that occurred in the research field as a result of being a victim of violence. The description of the symptoms that appear is then processed to identify research variables and then proceed with conducting a survey study of 109 respondents who are willing, have, or are currently experiencing violence in dating. The research data were collected using a questionnaire instrument for measuring self-esteem and Stockholm syndrome, which were tested for reliability using a single trial test. Descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression were used to calculate the research quantitative data.

## Results and Discussion

Self-esteem is a variable that was successfully revealed through the interview process. Facts that represent self-esteem are found in a state of declining self-esteem due to difficulty and fear of making decisions. Another fact is that there is no other choice but to have a relationship because if you move on to another, there is a fear that the fallen self-esteem will get worse. Moreover, because there is a threat given by the partner, the feeling of self-worth falls to the point that it results in a decrease in confidence in one's abilities, assuming that there is no more positive value from oneself in a relationship.

Symptoms similar to Stockholm syndrome were also collected through the interview process. The picture in the form of receiving harsh treatment is because the victim has great affection for his partner. Some even develop the belief that the abusive treatment of a partner is an expression of affection for the victim. Another fact is that because the relationship is already long enough, they choose to continue to survive even though they are treated harshly. No one else can understand that a partner is also a reason to choose to stick around.

There are three forms of violence reported by the subject. The first form is getting treatment with harsh and inappropriate words. The second form is getting rough treatment in the context of sexuality. The last is being a victim of physical violence from their partner. The results of the analysis found that verbal violence was the most widely accepted. When analysed by including the mean value of Stockholm syndrome, it turns out that the tendency is higher than sexual and physical violence. Being a victim of sexual violence tends to form lower self-esteem. The results of the calculation show that the lowest average value of self-esteem is in victims of sexual violence.

Table 1: Descriptive Forms of Violence

| Violence Frequency Stockholm |    | Mean       |             |
|------------------------------|----|------------|-------------|
|                              |    | Syndrome   | Self-esteem |
| Verbal                       | 46 | 73.283 (S) | 50.848 (S)  |
| Sexual                       | 36 | 72.139 (S) | 48.944 (S)  |
| Physical                     | 27 | 69.111 (S) | )           |

## Results

Rihandita (2018) revealed that the most common forms of violence experienced by victims during courtship were verbal and emotional violence. In dating relationships, the most common form of violence is verbal abuse. Although there are three forms of violence, verbal violence is the thing most victims receive in a dating relationship (Julianto et al., 2020). Verbal abuse is a form of violence that correlates with the self-esteem of the victim (Saragih, 2021). The use of violent words is an important part of explaining Stockholm syndrome. Because threats tend to make it difficult for fear to make decisions. Bolívar-Suárez et al. (2021) can explain this because self-esteem also determines the victim's acceptance of violence

Table 2 Hypothesis Statistical Test

| Variable    | Statistical    | Stockholm Syndrome |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Self-Esteem | Spearman's Rho | 0.472***           |
|             | P-Value        | < 0.001            |
|             | R2             | 0.493              |

Source: results of research data analysis

Self-esteem has been shown to have a relationship with Stockholm syndrome. The results of the study found that there was a relationship in the opposite direction. The relationship that occurs is seen in the negative coefficient, a very significant relationship. The implication is that self-esteem can predict the tendency of Stockholm syndrome in victims of dating violence. Low self-esteem tends to predict an increase in the victim's attempt to commit Stockholm syndrome to his partner. Self-esteem contributes significantly to making victims of dating violence more likely to develop Stockholm syndrome. Low self-esteem can form a tendency to create comfort and maintain relationships despite experiencing harsh treatment from their partners. Infante explained that a victim who finds dating violence has low self-esteem (Jones & Gardner, 2002). Due to the formation of low self-esteem, victims of courtship violence receive harsh treatment from their partners and choose to stay (Sholikhah & Masykur, 2020). According to Qinthara, (2021) individuals with high self-esteem can more easily be free from relationships in which there is violence, this is because when individuals have high self-esteem, they will prefer to find new relationships rather than stay in relationships. which made him feel insecure. Yuliani and Fitria (2017) explained that the increase in Stockholm syndrome occurs because of the emotional attachment between the victim and his partner.

The results found in the study provide other information regarding the implications of the process of undergoing education carried out by respondents. It seems that the condition of the respondent experiencing an unhealthy situation in a romantic relationship will have an impact on his comfort in carrying out and completing the study. One of the effects that are easily felt is a decrease in cognitive quality which can have an impact on the study process. As revealed by the research results of R. Y. Wijaya, (2021) which revealed that dating does influence student learning concentration. Disturbing the

concentration of studying, lowering college achievement, can affect one's relationship with friends and family, and also causes forgetting things because of thinking about a girlfriend.

## Conclusions

Self-esteem and Stockholm syndrome are variables that can explain the phenomenon of female students choosing to survive in relationships that contain acts of violence. Low self-esteem has a close relationship with the tendency to do Stockholm syndrome. On the other hand, the tendency of Stockholm syndrome can be suppressed by having good self-esteem. It is difficult to form positive self-esteem in the victim. The existence of harsh treatment increasingly makes victims of violence receive harsh treatment from their partners. Turning things around is something that is done to be used as an excuse to maintain a relationship. This research has not reached out to the strategic steps that need to be taken or carried out to improve the quality of life of victims of dating violence. For this reason, studies are needed that can produce easy handling modules and can help victims in making decisions that do not harm themselves. Considering not only the problem of hampered social interaction but also problems in carrying out education which is closely related to the ideals of interest in work.

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