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Body Shaming Among Male Adolescents in Lhokseumawe

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ABSTRACT

Body shaming is a form of bullying characterized by demeaning or criticizing an individual's physical appearance through teasing, negative comments, or derogatory remarks. Experiences of body shaming may influence adolescents' responses toward themselves and others, including the development of similar behaviors as a form of self-defense. On the other hand, such experiences may encourage the development of positive attitudes toward one's body, known as body positive. However, some adolescents may continue to experience embarrassment and low self-confidence regarding their physical appearance, leading them to make various changes, such as dieting and exercising, to achieve an idealized body shape. This study aimed to describe body shaming behavior among adolescents. A quantitative method with a cross-sectional design was employed. The study population consisted of 139 respondents, and 126 respondents were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using univariate analysis with SPSS. The results showed that body shaming behavior among adolescents was generally categorized as low, with 98.4% of respondents in the low category and 1.6% in the high category. Schools are expected to provide education on body shaming and self-acceptance, particularly regarding teasing related to body shape and body hair, which was still reported among the respondents.

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INTRODUCTION

Body shaming has become an issue of growing international concern because it is closely associated with how individuals perceive and treat other people's bodies. This phenomenon is commonly observed among adolescents, particularly in peer interactions and social media environments. Body shaming occurs when individuals receive negative comments, ridicule, or judgments about their

physical appearance, including body weight, body shape, body hair, skin color, and other physical characteristics (Oktiany, 2023). Cerolini et al. (2024) highlighted that body shaming has increasingly attracted attention in school environments, particularly among adolescents, with body weight being one of the most common physical characteristics targeted by peer ridicule.

In Indonesia, body shaming has also become a growing social concern. The number of reported body shaming cases increased from 206 cases in 2015 to 966 cases in 2018. Of these cases, the police resolved 374 cases in 2018. Furthermore, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) reported that in 2019, approximately 68% of body shaming cases involved vocational high school students (Pratama & Rahmasari, 2020). These figures indicate that body shaming remains a concern among adolescents and requires greater attention, particularly within educational settings.

Previous studies have also demonstrated the prevalence and various experiences of body shaming among adolescents. Kusumawati and Kamilah (2023), in a study examining body shaming among junior high school students, found that the majority of respondents were female (82 students; 67.5%), with the largest age group being 14 years old (73 students; 60.4%). Furthermore, 72 respondents (60%) reported experiencing a high level of body shaming. These findings indicate that body shaming is a relevant issue among adolescents during their physical and psychological development.

The effects of body shaming may extend beyond negative comments about physical appearance and influence individuals' psychological and social well-being. Hanifatunnisa and Lidya (2023), in their study of body shaming victims among students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Sriwijaya University, identified several emotional experiences associated with becoming a victim of body shaming. These included feelings of insecurity, worry, fear, emotional distress, and resentment toward the perpetrators. Such experiences suggest that body shaming may negatively affect self-acceptance and interpersonal relationships.

Further evidence was provided by Cerolini et al. (2024), who examined 919 secondary school students, of whom 57.1% were male. Their findings revealed that 37% of respondents had experienced at least one incident of body shaming during their lifetime, while approximately one in four students reported weight-related body shaming by peers or family members. These findings demonstrate that male adolescents are also vulnerable to body shaming and that this issue should not be viewed exclusively as a problem affecting female adolescents.

This study specifically involved male adolescents at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah Lhokseumawe. This focus was selected to provide a more context-specific understanding of body shaming

based on the characteristics of the students and their educational environment. The findings are expected to provide preliminary information for the school to identify forms of body shaming experienced by students, particularly those involving body shape, body weight, body hair, and skin color. Such information may contribute to creating a safe and supportive learning environment, promoting self-acceptance, and reducing jokes or negative comments targeting students' physical appearance. Therefore, this study aimed to describe body shaming among male adolescents at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah Lhokseumawe.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research method with a descriptive design using a cross-sectional approach to describe body shaming among adolescents at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah Lhokseumawe. In this design, data collection and variable measurements were conducted simultaneously at a single point in time.

The study was conducted at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah Lhokseumawe in September 2025. The study population consisted of 139 male adolescents who met the specified criteria. A total of 126 respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria were: male students enrolled at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah, able to communicate effectively, willing to participate as respondents, and present during data collection.

Data collection was conducted after obtaining institutional permission. The researchers approached students who met the inclusion criteria and explained the objectives, benefits, and procedures of the study. Respondents were then asked to sign an informed consent form and complete the questionnaire.

The collected data were processed through several stages, including editing, coding, cleaning, and tabulating. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using statistical software. Data analysis consisted of univariate analysis to describe the distribution of each study variable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics

Nomor	Karakteristik Responden	N	%
1	**Usia Responden**		
	12 Tahun	8	6,3
	13 Tahun	22	17,5
	14 Tahun	29	23,0
	15 Tahun	20	15,9
	16 Tahun	29	23,0
	17 Tahun	16	12,7
	18 Tahun	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
2	**Kelas**		
	VII	11	8,7
	VIII	15	11,9
	IX	18	14,3
	X	33	26,2
	XI	28	22,2
	XII	21	16,7
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
3	**Tinggal Bersama**		
	Orang Tua	121	96,0
	Saudara	5	4,0
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
4	**Media Sosial yang Digunakan***		
	TikTok	105	83,3
	Instagram	98	77,8
	Facebook	33	26,2
	WhatsApp	24	19,0
	YouTube	8	5,6
	Telegram	6	4,8
	X	4	3,2
	Michat	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Body Shaming Among Adolescents

Variabel	N	%
Gambaran Body Shaming pada Remaja		
Rendah	124	98,4
Tinggi	2	1,6
Total	**126**	**100,0**

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Fat Shaming

Nomor	Distribusi Jawaban Responden	N	%
1	**P1. Kritik berat badan terlalu gemuk**		
	Tidak Pernah	98	77,8
	Jarang	18	14,3
	Kadang-kadang	9	7,1
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	1	0,8
	Total	**126**	**100.0**
2	**P2. Dipanggil dengan panggilan buruk karena bentuk tubuh**		
	Tidak Pernah	72	57,1
	Jarang	31	24,6
	Kadang-kadang	15	11,9
	Sering	5	4,0
	Selalu	3	2,4
	Total	**126**	**100.0**
3	**P3. Dijelek-jelekkan/ditertawakan karena bentuk tubuh**		
	Tidak Pernah	80	63,5
	Jarang	29	23,0
	Kadang-kadang	9	7,1
	Sering	5	4,0
	Selalu	3	2,4
	Total	**126**	**100.0**
4	**P4. Diejek dengan sebutan "bontet"**		
	Tidak Pernah	120	95,2
	Jarang	3	2,4
	Kadang-kadang	1	0,8
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100.0**

Nomor	Distribusi Jawaban Responden	N	%
5	**P5. Diejek gendut/gembrot/drum minyak/gentong**		
	Tidak Pernah	111	88,1
	Jarang	9	7,1
	Kadang-kadang	4	3,2
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
6	**P6. Dihindari karena bentuk tubuh gemuk**		
	Tidak Pernah	113	89,7
	Jarang	6	4,8
	Kadang-kadang	4	3,2
	Sering	1	0,8
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
7	**P7. Dipanggil "drum minyak"**		
	Tidak Pernah	120	95,2
	Jarang	1	0,8
	Kadang-kadang	3	2,4
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
8	**P8. Dikatakan "tronton"**		
	Tidak Pernah	122	96,8
	Jarang	2	1,6
	Kadang-kadang	0	0,0
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Skinny Shaming

Nomor	Distribusi Jawaban Responden	N	%
1	**P9. Diejek terlalu langsing seperti triplek**		
	Tidak Pernah	111	88,1
	Jarang	10	7,9
	Kadang-kadang	3	2,4
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
2	**P10. Dihindari karena bentuk tubuh kurus**		
	Tidak Pernah	114	90,5
	Jarang	8	6,3
	Kadang-kadang	2	1,6
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
3	**P11. Diejek dengan sebutan "stunting"**		
	Tidak Pernah	115	91,3
	Jarang	6	4,8
	Kadang-kadang	2	1,6
	Sering	1	0,8
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
4	**P12. Diejek "hati-hati ditiup angin"**		
	Tidak Pernah	115	91,3
	Jarang	6	4,8
	Kadang-kadang	2	1,6
	Sering	1	0,8
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

Nomor	Distribusi Jawaban Responden	N	%
5	**P13. Diejek "kurang gizi"**		
	Tidak Pernah	111	88,1
	Jarang	12	9,5
	Kadang-kadang	1	0,8
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
6	**P14. Dikatakan "layang-layang putus"**		
	Tidak Pernah	124	98,4
	Jarang	0	0,0
	Kadang-kadang	0	0,0
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
7	**P15. Dikatakan seperti "pasien TBC"**		
	Tidak Pernah	124	98,4
	Jarang	0	0,0
	Kadang-kadang	0	0,0
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Body Hair Shaming

Nomor	Variabel Data Univariat	N	%
1	**P16. Diejek botak/plontos**		
	Tidak Pernah	92	73,0
	Jarang	16	12,7
	Kadang-kadang	16	12,7
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
2	**P17. Diejek berbulu seperti monyet**		
	Tidak Pernah	116	92,1
	Jarang	3	2,4
	Kadang-kadang	4	3,2
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	3	2,4
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
3	**P18. Diejek "jenggot kambing"**		
	Tidak Pernah	122	96,8
	Jarang	1	0,8
	Kadang-kadang	0	0,0
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	3	2,4
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
4	**P19. Dikatakan bapak-bapak/laki-laki karena berkumis**		
	Tidak Pernah	111	88,1
	Jarang	3	2,4
	Kadang-kadang	5	4,0
	Sering	4	3,2
	Selalu	3	2,4
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Skin Color Shaming

1	**P20. Teman menghargai kekurangan yang ada pada diri saya**		
	Tidak Pernah	33	26,2
	Jarang	17	13,5
	Kadang-kadang	23	18,3
	Sering	24	19,0
	Selalu	29	23,0
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
2	**P21. Diejek karena berkulit hitam/gelap/berjerawat**		
	Tidak Pernah	98	77,8
	Jarang	17	13,5
	Kadang-kadang	6	4,8
	Sering	3	2,4
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
3	**P22. Diejek dengan kata "magrib"**		
	Tidak Pernah	119	94,4
	Jarang	3	2,4
	Kadang-kadang	1	0,8
	Sering	1	0,8
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**
4	**P23. Diejek dengan kata "vampire" karena terlalu pucat**		
	Tidak Pernah	119	94,4
	Jarang	4	3,2
	Kadang-kadang	1	0,8
	Sering	0	0,0
	Selalu	2	1,6
	Total	**126**	**100,0**

The results from 126 respondents showed that 124 (98.4%) were classified as having a low level of body shaming, while 2 (1.6%) were categorized as having a high level. Overall, experiences of body shaming among the study participants were relatively low. However, these findings should be interpreted alongside the distribution of responses to individual questionnaire items, as some respondents reported experiences involving ridicule, name-calling, or comments about their physical appearance. In the fat-shaming dimension, for example, 42.9% of respondents reported responses other than "never" to the item concerning derogatory nicknames related to body shape, while 36.5% reported having experienced teasing or being laughed at because of their body shape. In the body hair-shaming dimension, 27.0% of respondents also reported responses other than "never" regarding teasing about being bald or having a shaved head. In contrast, responses in the skinny-shaming and skin-color-shaming dimensions were predominantly categorized as "never."

The overall low prevalence of body shaming does not necessarily indicate that all respondents had never experienced it. Although 124 respondents (98.4%) were classified in the low category, 2 respondents (1.6%) fell into the high category. Furthermore, several indicators revealed responses indicating experiences of ridicule, name-calling, or negative comments about physical appearance. Santrock (2019) explained that body shaming involves negative treatment or judgments based on an individual's physical characteristics, such as body weight, body shape, and appearance. Therefore, the overall low category should be interpreted as a result of the classification of cumulative scores rather than evidence that body shaming was entirely absent among the respondents.

Based on the distribution of individual responses, fat shaming emerged as one of the relatively more prominent dimensions compared with the others. For item P2, 72 respondents (57.1%)

stated that they had never received derogatory nicknames related to their body shape. However, 31 respondents (24.6%) answered rarely, 15 (11.9%) sometimes, 5 (4.0%) often, and 3 (2.4%) always experienced such treatment. For item P3, 80 respondents (63.5%) reported that they had never been teased or laughed at because of their body shape, while 46 respondents (36.5%) reported experiencing such treatment at varying frequencies. These findings indicate that although the overall level of fat shaming was low, comments related to body weight and shape were still experienced by some respondents. This finding is consistent with Warnick et al. (2022), whose systematic review and meta-analysis identified a significant association between weight stigma and mental health problems among children and adolescents, with an overall moderate effect size (r = 0.32).

In the skinny-shaming dimension, respondents' answers were predominantly categorized as "never." For item P9, 111 respondents (88.1%) reported that they had never been teased for being considered too thin. For item P10, 114 respondents (90.5%) stated that they had never been excluded because of their thin body shape. The highest proportions of "never" responses were recorded for items P14 and P15, each involving 124 respondents (98.4%). These findings indicate that experiences of skinny shaming were relatively uncommon in this study. Nevertheless, responses of "rarely," "sometimes," "often," and "always" suggest that adolescents with thin body types may still become targets of appearance-related comments or judgments. Wang et al. (2024) also reported that peer appearance teasing was associated with restrained eating among adolescents through increased fear of negative appearance evaluations and body surveillance.

Regarding body hair shaming, most respondents also selected the "never" response category. However, item P16, which concerned teasing about being bald or having a shaved head, revealed a more noticeable occurrence of such experiences. A total of 92 respondents (73.0%) reported never experiencing this form of teasing, 16 (12.7%) answered rarely, 16 (12.7%) sometimes, and 2 (1.6%) always. Thus, 27.0% of respondents reported experiences indicating that they had received comments or ridicule related to their hair condition. This finding is consistent with the study by Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2024), which indicated that appearance-related teasing by peers is one of the factors associated with online appearance preoccupation during adolescence.

In the skin-color-shaming dimension, most respondents reported never experiencing ridicule. Item P21 showed that 98 respondents (77.8%) had never been teased because of having dark skin, darker skin tone, or skin conditions such as acne. For items P22 and P23, 119 respondents (94.4%) each reported never receiving derogatory labels such as "magrib" or "vampire." Overall,

experiences of body shaming related to skin color were relatively low. However, item P21 showed a higher proportion of reported experiences than items P22 and P23. This finding suggests that skin color and skin conditions, including acne, may still become subjects of negative comments among some adolescents. These findings are consistent with Ningsih et al. (2023), who identified skin color and skin conditions as forms of body shaming and reported an association between body shaming and body image. In addition to these items, P20 was a positively worded statement concerning peer appreciation and acceptance of personal imperfections. A total of 29 respondents (23.0%) answered "always" and 24 (19.0%) answered "often," indicating that some respondents experienced social support and acceptance from their peers.

CONCLUSION

Body shaming among male adolescents at Dayah Modern Ihyaussunnah Lhokseumawe was generally classified as low. Of the 126 respondents, 124 (98.4%) were categorized as having a low level of body shaming, while 2 (1.6%) were classified as having a high level. Nevertheless, responses to several indicators revealed that experiences of body shaming still occurred, particularly in the form of name-calling or teasing related to body shape (fat shaming) and comments concerning body hair. The school or dayah is encouraged to strengthen education on body shaming, self-acceptance, and respectful communication regarding physical appearance. Teachers and homeroom teachers should provide educational responses to appearance-based teasing, while parents and peers are expected to foster supportive communication and avoid making physical characteristics a subject of jokes.

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