

Strength-Based Counseling Interventions to Enhance Adolescents' Self-Esteem and Psychological Well-Being

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Abstract. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage often marked by identity exploration, emotional instability, and heightened sensitivity to social evaluation. These challenges can significantly affect adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being, especially in the context of academic demands, peer pressure, and family-related stress. Self-esteem serves as a vital foundation for positive psychological development, while psychological well-being encompassing self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relationships is essential for overall mental health. In response to the limitations of deficit-focused counseling approaches, strength-based counseling (SBC) has emerged as a promising alternative that focuses on individual strengths, values, and potentials. Rooted in positive psychology, SBC aims to empower adolescents by fostering resilience, self-efficacy, and a more positive self-concept. This literature review aims to examine the effectiveness of strength-based counseling interventions in enhancing self-esteem and psychological well-being among adolescents. Through a systematic review of peer-reviewed studies published between 2010 and 2025, this study identifies key strategies, outcomes, and theoretical contributions of SBC interventions in adolescent populations. The findings suggest that SBC contributes to increased self-confidence, emotional regulation, and motivation in adolescents, and can be effectively implemented in school and community-based settings. This review also highlights practical implications for counselors and educators, advocating for a shift toward more empowering, affirming, and developmentally appropriate approaches in adolescent mental health support.

Keywords: Strength-based counseling, self-esteem, psychological well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical period marked by rapid physical, emotional, and psychological changes. During this stage, adolescents undergo identity exploration, face increasing social pressures, and begin developing a stable sense of self. However, these developmental tasks often come with challenges, including a heightened vulnerability to low self-esteem and poor psychological well-being. Issues such as academic stress, family conflicts, and peer pressure can negatively impact adolescents' self-concept and mental health (Birkeland et al., 2012). These concerns are becoming increasingly prevalent in school and community settings, raising the urgency for effective intervention strategies.

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of self-esteem in adolescent development, highlighting its association with resilience, adaptive coping, and healthy interpersonal relationships (De Caroli & Sagone, 2016). Similarly, psychological well-being which encompasses dimensions such as self-acceptance, purpose in life, positive relationships, and personal growth is recognized as a core indicator of adolescents' mental health and life satisfaction (Maharani, 2021). While various intervention programs have been developed to address mental health issues in youth, many are problem-focused, which may inadvertently reinforce deficits rather than foster strengths.

In response, Strength-Based Counseling (SBC) offers an alternative approach that emphasizes clients' inherent strengths, values, and positive attributes. Rather than focusing on problems, SBC aims to empower individuals by helping them recognize and utilize their own resources to overcome challenges and build a more positive self-concept (Khatri et al., 2024). This approach aligns with the principles of positive psychology and has shown promising results in enhancing self-esteem and psychological well-being in various populations (Perdana et al., 2022).

Despite growing empirical support, a systematic synthesis of studies focusing specifically on adolescents remains limited. There is a need to explore the mechanisms, strategies, and outcomes of SBC interventions as applied to adolescent populations. This represents a research gap that needs to be addressed in order to inform future practice and policy in guidance and counseling.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to conduct a literature review of strength-based counseling interventions aimed at enhancing adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being. The study seeks to identify the core components of successful interventions, examine their effectiveness, and discuss their practical implications. The findings are expected to contribute to both theoretical understanding and the practical implementation of positive, strengths-oriented counseling strategies in

educational and community settings.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a literature review design aimed at comprehensively examining previous research on the effectiveness of strength-based counseling interventions in enhancing adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being. The researcher conducted a systematic review of the literature to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic, identify commonly used intervention strategies, and synthesize key findings from relevant academic sources. Data collection was carried out by searching for scientific articles across several reputable databases, including Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), PubMed, and ResearchGate. The keywords used in the search process included: "strength-based counseling," "positive psychology intervention," "self-esteem in adolescence," "psychological well-being," "counseling intervention," and "adolescents," in both English and Indonesian. The inclusion criteria for this literature review were as follows: (1) articles published between 2010 and 2024, (2) studies that addressed strength-based interventions in adolescent contexts, (3) research that explicitly measured the impact on self-esteem and/or psychological well-being, and (4) articles based on empirical research or systematic reviews. Articles that did not meet these criteria, or those categorized as opinion pieces without empirical evidence, were excluded from the analysis.

After an initial screening and thorough reading process, a total of 8 articles met the inclusion criteria and were selected for further analysis. These articles were analyzed using a narrative thematic analysis approach by identifying patterns of findings, types of intervention strategies, and practical implications of each study. The researcher conducted manual open coding, reread each document, and formulated major themes that emerged across the literature. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation and peer debriefing to ensure objectivity and consistency in data interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to systematically examine various scientific findings related to strength-based counseling interventions in enhancing adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being. The literature review conducted on eight selected articles indicates that strength-based interventions generally have a positive impact on the development of adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being across diverse settings and methodological approaches.

Tabel 1
Ringkasan Literature Review Intervensi Konseling Berbasis Kekuatan

No	Penulis (Tahun)	Judul Artikel	Jenis Intervensi/Kajian	Subjek/Populasi	Temuan Utama
1	(Wahyu Widyatmoko et al., 2024)	<i>Tinjauan Sistematis Intervensi Konseling Berbasis Alam pada Remaja</i>	Konseling berbasis alam (nature-based counseling)	Remaja	Meningkatkan harga diri, resiliensi, dan keterhubungan dengan alam. Intervensi meliputi ekspedisi, terapi berbasis alam, dan pendidikan lingkungan.
2	(Perdana et al., 2022)	<i>Alternative Counseling Interventions in Improving Self-Esteem of Students' Subjective Well Being</i>	Konseling REBT (literature review)	Siswa sekolah	Pendekatan REBT efektif meningkatkan self-esteem dan subjective well-being melalui teknik asertif, kognitif, dan modeling.
3	(Islamiah et	<i>CBT untuk</i>	Cognitive Behavioral	Anak usia 10	CBT terbukti efektif

No	Penulis (Tahun)	Judul Artikel	Jenis Intervensi/Kajian	Subjek/ Populasi	Temuan Utama
	al., 2015)	<i>Meningkatkan Self-Esteem Anak Usia Sekolah</i>	Therapy (CBT)	tahun (studi kasus)	meningkatkan self-esteem dengan mengubah pola pikir negatif melalui 13 sesi intervensi.
4	(Sabrina et al., 2025)	<i>Psikoedukasi untuk Meningkatkan Self-Esteem dan Self-Image Klien Rehabilitasi</i>	Psikoedukasi berbasis kekuatan diri	Klien rehabilitasi BNNP	Psikoedukasi berbasis eksplorasi kekuatan personal secara signifikan meningkatkan self-esteem dan kesadaran diri.
5	(Praekanata et al., 2024)	<i>Strategi Bimbingan Konseling dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Psikologis Siswa di Era Digital</i>	Konseling berbasis teknologi, mindfulness, dan spiritual	Siswa SMA (literatur review)	Kombinasi teknologi, CBT, dan spiritualitas mampu meningkatkan kesejahteraan psikologis siswa digital-native.
6	(Wijaya et al., 2024)	<i>Peran Konseling Komunitas dalam Meningkatkan Self-Esteem Penyandang Disabilitas</i>	Konseling komunitas berbasis dukungan sosial	Penyandang disabilitas	Konseling komunitas memperkuat jaringan sosial dan meningkatkan harga diri melalui pemberdayaan kelompok.
7	(Fadhilla et al., 2025)	<i>Peran SFBT dalam Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Diri Remaja</i>	Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)	Remaja	Pendekatan SFBT terbukti efektif dalam waktu singkat untuk meningkatkan kepercayaan diri dan pemberdayaan diri remaja.
8	(Sugiyo et al., 2019)	<i>Profil Psychological Well-Being Siswa SMA</i>	Deskriptif kuantitatif	120 siswa kelas X	Mayoritas siswa berada dalam kategori sedang untuk psychological well-being; tidak ada perbedaan signifikan antara gender.

The findings of this literature review indicate that strength-based counseling approaches have a significant impact on enhancing adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being. This approach has proven effective due to its emphasis on the exploration, reinforcement, and actualization of individuals' positive potential, rather than focusing solely on weaknesses or problems. In the context of adolescence a period marked by identity crisis and the formation of self-concept (Erikson, 1968; Santrock, 2016) this strategy offers a healthy and constructive space for youth to develop a more adaptive and positive self-perception.

Several approaches examined in the literature demonstrate their own unique contributions. For example, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) show

that transforming negative thought patterns into more rational and constructive ones directly contributes to improved self-esteem (Beck, 1976; Ellis, 1994). CBT enables adolescents to identify cognitive distortions, while REBT emphasizes the importance of values and rational thinking in responding to emotional situations. These approaches are particularly effective for adolescents dealing with guilt, pessimism, or low self-worth.

Furthermore, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) is a short-term counseling approach highly applicable to educational settings, as it emphasizes existing solutions and internal strengths. This method has been shown to significantly boost adolescents' self-confidence and self-efficacy within just a few sessions (Anshori, 2024), making it practical for school settings with limited time and resources.

An intriguing finding also emerges from nature-based counseling approaches, as explored by (Wahyu Widyatmoko et al., 2024). Such interventions not only enhance self-esteem but also strengthen adolescents' connection with nature, reduce stress, and expand their sense of meaning and self-awareness. This approach offers a fresh perspective in counseling, especially in the face of increasing adolescent alienation due to a digital lifestyle. Direct engagement with the natural environment provides reflective experiences that enrich the spiritual and affective dimensions of psychological well-being.

Community-based counseling and psychoeducational models also show positive outcomes. These approaches emphasize the importance of social support, one of the primary protective factors in adolescent mental health (Jerome et al., 2023). Psychoeducation that highlights personal strengths and self-worth allows adolescents to reflect on past experiences, recognize achievements, and internalize success as part of a positive self-identity.

The consistency of these findings leads to one central conclusion: strength-based counseling interventions can activate adolescents' internal mechanisms for psychological growth. By focusing on individual strengths, these interventions not only enhance self-esteem and psychological well-being, but also foster resilience, self-efficacy, and a deeper sense of purpose. This aligns with Seligman's theory of Positive Psychology (2011), which posits that the cultivation of personal strengths is key to genuine happiness and well-being.

Moreover, the study highlights the need for contextualized approaches that consider cultural, social, and technological dynamics. For instance, the integration of digital technology into counseling interventions, as explored by (Praekanata et al., 2024), demonstrates that adolescents' strengths today also lie in their adaptive abilities to keep up with technological advancements. This reflects the urgency of designing more contextual, generation-specific strength-based interventions tailored to Generation Z.

This study presents a novel contribution by offering a systematic synthesis across multiple strength-based counseling approaches, specifically focused on the adolescent population. Unlike previous studies that typically evaluate a single model of intervention, this review identifies common threads of effectiveness among diverse models and highlights the unique advantages each approach offers in shaping adolescent self-esteem and psychological well-being.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study enriches the field of guidance and counseling by providing a strong empirical foundation for the development of strength-based approaches at the secondary education level. Practically, the findings offer a valuable reference for the design of adolescent-friendly, cost-effective, and applicable school-based intervention programs. These insights can be utilized by school counselors, guidance teachers, and non-formal institutions that address adolescent mental health. Furthermore, this review has the potential to inform the development of more humanistic education policies those that not only emphasize cognitive achievement but also prioritize the holistic psychological well-being of students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the systematic review of eight scholarly articles, it can be concluded that strength-based counseling approaches consistently demonstrate effectiveness in enhancing adolescents' self-esteem and psychological well-being. Interventions that prioritize individual strengths, potential, and positive values enable adolescents to develop a healthier self-perception, strengthen resilience, and cultivate a more meaningful sense of purpose in life.

The various approaches analyzed including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT), psychoeducation, as well as nature-based and community-based counseling provide strong evidence that individual strengths can

serve as a foundational element in adolescents' psychological recovery and development. These approaches align with the developmental needs of adolescents, who require affirmation, meaning-making, and strong social support systems.

This review offers a novel contribution by mapping diverse strength-based counseling approaches in a comprehensive manner an area that has received limited attention in previous research. It also emphasizes the importance of adapting interventions to dynamic cultural and technological contexts. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for practitioners, academics, and policymakers in designing more effective, holistic, and contextually relevant guidance and counseling programs that meet the psychological needs of today's adolescents.

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It is hoped that the results of this research will contribute meaningfully to the advancement of knowledge, particularly in the field of guidance and counseling, and serve as an inspiration to improve psychological support services for adolescents in Indonesia.

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