

The Contribution of Peer Social Support to Psychological Well-Being among Overseas Students

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ABSTRACT

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Overseas students are students who receive higher education and live far from their place of birth, parents, and relatives and must face academic and psychological challenges during their education. The many difficulties and demands expose overseas students to psychological disorders that impact their psychological well-being. As a result, overseas students require social support from those around them; social support is one of the fact factors affecting call well-being. Peer social support is one of several components of social support. The study aims to determine the role of peer social support in the psychological well-being of overseas students in Yogyakarta. Data was collected using a peer social support scale and a Likert scale model for psychological well-being. One hundred seven (170) overseas students in Yogyakarta between 18 and 21 years old participated. According to the findings of this study, there is a significant positive relationship between peer social support and psychological well-being. The effective contribution in this study is 39.8 percent, and the correlation coefficient is 0.631. In this study, the significance level was $0.005 < 0.05$.

Keywords

Demands

Overseas Students

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Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, on March 2, 2020, the Indonesian President announced that the COVID-19 virus that shocked all countries entered Indonesia. The existence of the COVID-

19 virus entering Indonesia made the Indonesian government implement policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. One of the policies is psychological distancing. Through a circular letter from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued a policy regarding the teaching and learning process for students and students from home through distance learning. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the policies that must be complied with, the protocol has had a considerable impact, especially in education [1]. This is a challenge for students and students in carrying out their activities as students by complying with the policies set by the government. Many countries have also applied this policy for student safety [2]-[5].

On the other side, education significantly contributes to improving a nation's quality. Through education, the quality of human resources can be improved. The highest level of student education is for a student pursuing higher education, be it a university, institute, high school, academy, community academy, or polytechnic [6]. To get a higher education from the major of interest, the city, and college that is the destination as a student, proper and comfortable facilities and infrastructure make individuals willing to leave their place of birth to get a higher education. These individuals are referred to as overseas students. One of the many cities in Indonesia that have become individual destinations is Yogyakarta. In Yogyakarta, many public and private universities are known as the city of students [7]. This was reinforced based on the Higher Education Database in 2018, namely, the province of the Special Region of Yogyakarta recorded 640 study programs, and there were 253,111 students enrolled, with a total of 56,633 new students and graduates 41,100. There are 26 universities, seven institutes, 56 high schools, 39 academies, one community academy, and nine polytechnics [8]. Meanwhile, the number of immigrant students is 84,885 (60%), and as many as 57,334 (40%) are studying in Yogyakarta [9].

College students are called emerging adults, meaning the individual processes from adolescents to adults. The age range for emerging adulthood is 18-21 years or late adolescence [10]. The most prominent characteristic of emerging adulthood is the instability within the individual. Individuals who get the title of the highest student in education face a new environment, carrying out social interactions with groups or peers with different backgrounds [11]. Several students often experience difficulties in facing the challenges and demands of higher education. The adaptation process predicts student resilience and academic performance [12]. Explorations that must be carried out by overseas students in all areas of life apart from government policies against the spread of COVID-19 are finance, romance, academic values, and friendships. As a result of the problems faced by overseas students, there are psychological disorders such as anxiety, stress, and depression. Psychological problems impact decreasing psychological well-being [13].

Psychological well-being describes the extent to which individuals feel their lives have meaning, purpose, and direction, how individuals view themselves according to their personal beliefs, how individuals utilize talents and potential within individuals, and how well these individuals manage situations that occur. They establish interpersonal relationships and accept themselves, including personal awareness and self-limitations [14].

Ref. [14] also explained that psychological well-being is a picture of individual psychological health based on fulfilling the criteria of positive psychological function. Psychologically humans should have a positive attitude toward themselves and others. Individuals should be able to make their own decisions, regulate behavior, and choose and shape an environment that suits the needs of the individual. Every individual has a goal in life, and the individual tries to explore and develop the individual self as much as possible.

The phenomenon of low psychological well-being among university students can be found in the research of Ref. [15], with a percentage showing that 27.26% of psychology students at Gadjah Mada University have low psychological well-being. Ref. [16] found that 46.8% of students at the University of Indonesia had low psychological well-being. Then as many as 47.8% of students at the Islamic University of Indonesia have low psychological well-being [17]. Then, as many as 38% of Indonesian University of Education students have low psychological well-being [18].

Ref. [14] explained that social support factors could help personal development tend to be positive and can support individuals in going through and dealing with everyday life. In adult individuals, the higher the level of social interaction an individual has, the higher their psychological well-being level. Conversely, individuals who do not have close friends tend to have low levels of psychological well-being.

The instability that occurs in student development, according to Ref. [11], is because students have challenges in dealing with a new environment and carrying out social interactions with groups or peers with different backgrounds and regions. Several students often experience difficulties in dealing with the demands of higher education. The adaptation process carried out by students while sitting on a lecture bench is a predictor of student resilience and academic performance [12]. Overseas students who have not received peer social support will impact their development. They will feel lonely and feel not accepted by the people around them. In addition, students also feel worthless, which in turn causes psychological disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression resulting in a decrease in psychological well-being in students.

The peer social support factor mediates between the individual and the stressor. Peer social support is an action or behavior received and obtained from others so that an individual feels, or has comfortable thoughts, care, and help that individual needs [20]. Social support can

help deal with unpleasant situations, improve the ability to adjust or adapt, and be a support when facing problems [13].

Methods

A. Research design

The design of this study uses a quantitative descriptive statistical methodology in the form of numerical and statistical data processing in describing this research. Data were collected using the online and offline questionnaire method using the Google form media and through forms. Data collection was carried out for approximately two weeks in March-April 2022. To obtain participants, electronic posters containing invitations to participate in the research were distributed via social media and various groups and distributed directly to participants. This study used a correlational design and data analysis to examine the relationship between peer social support and psychological well-being among overseas students in Yogyakarta. The correlation coefficient technique uses the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with the help of SPSS 26 for Windows to measure whether the scale attributes used are valid or not with the help of 3 expert judgments and whether the scale used is reliable.

B. Participant

The population in this study were undergraduate students studying in Yogyakarta with an age range of 18-21 years. Participants can come from semesters 1-8. The technique used in this research is nonprobability sampling, namely purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was chosen because of several considerations and specific criteria that must be met in the sample used by the researcher. Researchers distributed questionnaires to overseas undergraduate students from 2018-2021 from semesters 1-8. In general, it is divided into four sections. The first contains research information sheets, statements of consent to participate, personal data, and two research instrument data. The participants obtained were 117 participants. Participants were obtained through the link created on Google form and got 30 participants. The researchers also distributed it via paper forms directly to 87 participants. Of the 117 participants, nine paper forms that had been distributed were not returned to the researchers, and 1 participant was eliminated because the data was an outlier. So, the total number of participants in this study was 107 participants.

C. Instruments

The instruments in this study used a psychological well-being scale and a peer social support scale. The psychological well-being scale was adapted and modified by researchers. The measuring instrument on this scale consists of 84 items comprising six aspects of psychological well-being. Psychological well-being aspects, namely, self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, independence, purpose in life, self-development, and mastery of the

environment. Each aspect consists of 14 items, seven favorable and seven unfavorable. The total items on the psychological well-being scale in the trial became 76 because eight items were dropped. The validity test of the scale using the correlation coefficient technique was carried out using the Alpha coefficient technique using three expert judgments. The results of the validity on the psychological well-being scale, namely the value obtained is 0.667 with the correlation coefficient criterion used at 0.3, so it can be said that the psychological well-being scale has the validity of all the items. In the validity test, no items failed on the psychological well-being scale. However, the reliability of the psychological well-being scale decreased by eight from 84 to 76 items. The Cronbach Alpha value obtained at psychological well-being is 0.956, so it is reliable.

The peer social support scale is a measuring tool to determine peer social support received by overseas students in Yogyakarta. The researchers made the peer social support scale using social support aspects from Sarafino (2016), which comprised 60 items. Peer social support consists of emotional, appreciation, instrument, information, and social network support. Each item consists of 12, six favorable and six unfavorable things. In the trial, the total items on the peer social support scale were reduced because 1 item was dropped, so the total items used in data collection were 59 items. In the validity test, no items failed on the peer social support scale. However, the reliability of peer social support scale items decreased by one from 60, so it becomes 59. The Cronbach Alpha value obtained at psychological well-being is 0.976, so it is reliable.

D. Data analysis technique

Data processing uses a quantitative approach with purposive sampling and non-probability sampling techniques. The descriptive analysis was each variable's mean, standard deviation, and frequency. The assumption test performed was the normality test with One Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov, linearity test, coefficient of determination test, and correlation test using Pearson's Product Moment data analysis technique with the help of SPSS 26 for Windows. Pearson's Product Moment correlation test is parametric statistical data processing or not a surrogate test because the data obtained is regular and linear. Pearson's Product Moment Analysis technique was chosen to answer the hypothesis of whether peer social support contributes to psychological well-being for overseas students in Yogyakarta and to see whether this contribution is positive or negative.

Results

Based on the comparison of hypothetical data and empirical data from the two scales in Table 1, it is known that the mean value on the peer social support scale is smaller than the observed mean, namely $147.5 < 184.75$, so it can be said that peer social support tends to be

Table 1. Description of research data

Variable	Hypothetic		Empiric	
	M	SD	M	SD
Peer Social Support	147.5	295	184.75	21.904
Psychological Well-Being	190	38	218.81	24.126

Based on the comparison of hypothetical data and empirical data from the two scales in Table 1, it is known that the mean value on the peer social support scale is smaller than the observed mean, namely $147.5 < 184.75$, so it can be said that peer social support tends to be high. Meanwhile, on the psychological well-being scale, the hypothetical mean is higher than the empirical mean, namely $190 < 218.81$. Therefore, the psychological well-being felt by the participants tends to be high.

Table 2. Categorization of research data

Variable	Value Range	Category	Percentage
Peer Social Support	$X \leq 29.5$	Very low	0 (0%)
	$29.5 < X \leq 147.5$	Low	5 (4.7%)
	$147.5 < X \leq 177$	High	42 (39.3%)
	$X > 177$	Very High	60 (56.1%)
Psychological Well-being	$X \leq 38$	Very Low	0 (0%)
	$38 < X \leq 190$	Low	12 (11.2%)
	$190 < X \leq 228$	High	63 (58.9%)
	$X > 228$	Very High	32 (29.9%)

Table 2 shows that overseas students get the most peer social support in the very high category (56.1%). Then, the psychological well-being of overseas students is in the high category (58.9%).

Based on Table 3, the normality test results show a significance of 0.060. Based on the decision-making of the normality test, if the significance value is > 0.05 , the data is usually distributed. However, if the value is < 0.05 , the data is said to be not normally distributed. The statistical value of the normality test is 0.060, which means that the significance value is $0.060 > 0.05$, and the data is usually distributed. From the statistical values obtained, the independent variable, peer social support, and the dependent variable psychological well-being show that the data is usually distributed.

The subsequent analysis is the linearity test, which functions to determine whether or not there is a linear relationship between the two variables: the independent variable, peer social support, and the dependent variable psychological well-being. Provisions for two variables are said to be linear if the significance value is > 0.05 is said to be linear, but if the significance value is < 0.05 , then the two variables are not said to be linear.

Table 3. Results of Variable Assumptions Test

Variable	PSS	PWB	
Peer Social Support	Normality Test	-	0.060
	Linearity Test	-	0.133
	R Square	-	0.398
	Pearson's	-	0.631**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	-	0.000

Remark: Peer Social Support (PSS); Psychological Well-being (PWB)

The statistical results of the linearity test show a significance value of $0.133 > 0.05$ which shows that the two variables are linearly related. This happens because the value of the deviation from linearity is > 0.05 .

Testing the product-moment correlation hypothesis on the results of this study showed a significant gain of 0.000, which means that both peer social support variables and psychological well-being variables have a significant relationship. The Product Moment Correlation test value obtained a value of 0.631** so that the significant results of the coefficient interval and the level of relationship between the scale of peer social support and psychological well-being in overseas students have a strong level of relationship and the type of relationship between these two variables is positive because there is no negative sign (-) product moment column table and reinforced by descriptive analysis which shows that the independent variable and the dependent variable both obtain high statistical values. Therefore, the results of the study are by the hypothesis that has been made by researchers, namely that there is a relationship between peer social support and psychological well-being in overseas students. The results of this study also reinforce previous research conducted by Ref. [13] and [21] which shows that social support has a relationship with psychological well-being in college students.

Meanwhile, test the coefficient of determination R square to determine the ability of peer social support variables to explain psychological well-being variables. The r fair value is 0.398; if it is a percentage, it becomes 39.8%. This means that the ability of peer social support variables to influence psychological well-being variables by 39.8% while 60.2% is influenced by other factors not explained in this study. These factors are such as demographics (age, gender, and socioeconomic status) [22], social support (family, group) [23], personal competence [24], religiosity [25] or personality [26].

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the peer social support and psychological well-being scales have a strong significant relationship with a positive pattern. Thus, the greater the peer social support a person has, the higher psychological well-being is felt. Moreover, vice versa, when a person has low peer social support, the psychological well-being felt by that person will also be lower.

Conclusion

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that peer social support can influence psychological well-being in a positive direction. The social support of peers that overseas students get, can make overseas students feel valued, loved, respected, and heard so that overseas students do not feel lonely and alone. Being in a phase where students are referred to as emerging adulthood is a period where they are full of turmoil inside. However, they can fulfill good psychological well-being during a pandemic thanks to the social support of their peers. This study's results are significant not only for overseas students but for all students who are not overseas because humans are social creatures, meaning they need one another. With this, students or the community must continue to carry out social interactions to help each other more. For future researchers, due to the large number of items made in this study, it was tough for the participants to reduce the number of items made and distributed to participants, especially during a pandemic like this.

Limitation and Suggestions

The limitation of this research is that the subject comes from a population of overseas students studying in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, so it is still not broad enough to be generalized. Future research is expected to have a more comprehensive range of subjects, for example, overseas students on the island of Java or overseas student populations throughout Indonesia.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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