The Role of Perceived Social Support Towards Stress in Early Adulthood During Pandemic Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

At the beginning of 2020, Indonesia and almost the entire world were experiencing a health crisis caused by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic causes changes in human activity patterns that can have negative effects such as decreased physical and mental health. In addition, a negative effect of a pandemic can be an increase in stress. Young adults are susceptible to stress because they are in a transitional period of life. So that the pandemic can increase stress in young adults. There are several factors that can affect stress such as perceived social support. The existence of perceived social support can help young adults manage stress. However, in certain situations such as stressors in the long term can change the quality of perceived social support, so that perceived social support cannot reduce the negative effects of stress. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of perceived social support and stress in early adulthood during pandemic covid-19. The total participants of this research are 385 with an age range of 18-39 years old, data was collected April-Mei 2021. This research method is quantitative using a questionnaire. The technique used in data collection is purposive sampling. This research used regression model as data analysis technique. The results of the data analysis showed that there was negative relationship and the role between perceived social support and stress in early adulthood during pandemic covid-19 ($R^2=0.056$, $p= 0.00<0.05$). Further analysis using perceived social support dimension showed that the family dimension ($p=0.00<0.05$), friends dimension ($p=0.00<0.05$) have a negative relationship with stress, but the significant others dimension ($p=0.054>0.05$) has no relationship with stress. The result of the data analysis showed there were differences in stress by gender ($p=0.014<0.05$).

Keywords: Perceived social support, Stress, Early adulthood, Pandemic covid-19.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, Indonesia and almost the entire world were experiencing a health crisis caused by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused changes in human activity patterns, such as school activities, office activities, restaurants, public facilities, which have not been able to carry out normal activities. Therefore, the effects of this pandemic can cause emergence, and fear [1]. Changes in human activity patterns cause negative effects on the physical and mental health of the entire community in the midst of a pandemic. One of the negative effects can be an increase in stress. During the pandemic, there was an increase in stress of 71% in young adults [2].

Moderate and high stress prevalence rates occur at the age below 25 years, this is because 90% of the population aged 18-29 years are more active on social media so they are more easily exposed to covid-19 news which can increase stress due to social distancing [3]. Before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, early adults were already vulnerable to stress. In early adulthood, they experience a life crisis, due to life transitions such as relationships, education, or work [4]. The existence of these transitions can cause instability or uncertainty that can cause stress. In addition, experiences that emerge in young adults such as moving out of the family home, entering college, starting a job can be stressful.

It should be noted that stress is not experienced by everyone, this is due to many factors that can affect stress. One of the factors that can affect stress is

perceived social support, which is an individual's perception of the social support received. Perceived social support can influence individuals in managing stressors [5]. The existence of the role of other people helps in dealing with stress such as telling other people can help a person improve mood and improve the situation [6]. In this study, researchers used perceived social support. This is because the individual's perception of the support received is more important than the actual support.

During this pandemic, social distancing and self-isolation have also limited the availability and acceptance of social support in line with the implementation of social restrictions [7]. This may increase the risk of mental health problems. The existence of social distancing can make individuals feel lonely. In this study [7] social support can serve as a barrier between pandemic concerns and psychological health at times of lower self-isolation. So it can be concluded that in certain situations and conditions, social support cannot always act as a buffer in reducing stress.

In the era of technology, social support can be done through online media without having to meet in person. Based on the research of Saud et al. [8] the use of social media can also make it easier for individuals to access social support. Based on the above phenomenon, the researcher wanted to see if there was a role for perceived social support and stress for young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

2.1 Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support is a personal subjective assessment of the availability and adequacy of resources and the response they get from their social environment [9]. Based on Gray et al. [10] Perceived social support is perceived social support regarding how individuals view friends, family members in providing support (material, or psychological). Perceived social support uses the buffering hypothesis which is perceived social support as a buffer to reduce pressure from stressors [11]. Perceived social support consists of three dimensions, namely: (a) family, the extent to which individuals perceive the support they receive from their families in helping to solve problems; (b) friends, the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to have support from friends when in difficult conditions; (c) significant others, the extent to which individuals get support from people who are considered special [11].

High perceived social support can reduce depression in young adults and if individuals have low perceived social support, they are more prone to experience anxiety and depression [12]. In addition, individuals with low

perceived social support have low self-efficacy, becoming more pessimistic. The worst impact of the lack of perceived social support, individuals can have suicidal thoughts. This is because individuals feel that there is no one to support them when needed. Therefore, perceived social support is also closely related to self-esteem.

2.2 Stress

Based on Lazarus et al. in Sundarasen, et al. [13] stress is defined as an individual's relationship with the surrounding environment that is perceived by the individual as overloading or exceeding resources that can threaten the individual's well-being. In line with this, in terms of the transactional model of stress and coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman, stress depends on a person's cognitive assessment and coping processes [14]. So that stress can be defined as how individuals perceive their environment, and includes stress responses and stressors.

There are several factors that can affect stress [13] such as: (a) low social support; (b) low self-esteem can cause stress, this is due to self-esteem as a defense against stressors; (c) experiencing a life crisis marked by transitions such as entering college, establishing relationships with the opposite sex or work (d) low emotional coping style because individuals cannot channel their emotions properly. In addition, stress factors can also be sourced: (a) the environment such as family demands, demands to always update science and technology; (b) stress from oneself, such as demands to achieve something; (c) stress due to thoughts, such as individual perceptions of the environment.

Stress is an unpleasant condition that certainly makes individuals experience discomfort. Discomfort or the impact of stress can be in the form of physiological changes (increased heart rate, muscle tension, etc.) as well as emotional and behavioral changes. The negative effects of stress can be suicidal ideation, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization symptoms, low self-esteem and lack of achievement [15]. However, stress (eustress) can have a positive impact such as stress can be an individual motivation to achieve and encourage creativity

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Participants in this study were 18-39 years old, male or female who had or frequently experienced stress symptoms such as (a) excessive worrying; (b) think negatively and always suspect that other people are covid sufferers; (c) feeling distant or disconnected from others; (d) feeling insecure; (e) easy fatigue; (f) difficulty concentrating; (g) difficulty sleeping; (h) difficult to make decisions; (i) difficulty relaxing; (j) easily feel angry, sad, afraid, hopeless; (k) withdraw, and others [16].

This research method is quantitative using a questionnaire. The technique used in data collection is non-probability sampling, namely purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher identifies the characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives of the available population. Data collection was distributed online using google-form and the data obtained were 385 participants. Data analysis using IBM SPSS 26 using simple regression.

The measuring instrument used in this study used two questionnaires. To measure the stress variable using the Covid-Perceived Stress Scale-10, consisting of 10 items with 4 positive items and 6 negative items [17]. Meanwhile, to measure the perceived social support variable, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support consists of 12 positive items [11].

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

Based on demographic data obtained by 385 participants, the number of participants were female (65.7%), the majority of participants were 22 years old (22.6%), the majority of participants had graduated from college (56.4%), the majority of them were working (68.6%) , working full time (57.4%), the majority of participants were unmarried (90.9%), the largest majority were Buddhism (37.9%), the majority participants had no history disease of covid-19 (91.9%), the majority of people around the participants have a history disease of covid-19 (69.6%), and most of the people around participant didn't die because of covid-19 disease (75.3%).

Researchers make categorization norms to make it easier to see a picture of the data for each variable. Researchers categorize them into three categories (low, medium, high) based on the empirical mean and standard deviation [18]. In the empirical statistics of the stress variable, the mean value is 2.0094, standard deviation = 0.59535, based on the formula in table 9 and obtained low = X < 1.41405, medium = 1.41405 X < 2.60475, high = 2.60475 X. In empirical statistics the perceived social support variable value the mean is 5.1121, standard deviation = 1.16816, based on the formula in table 9 and obtained low = X < 3.94394, medium = 3.94394 X < 6.28026, high = 6.28026 X.

Table 1: Interpretation Norm for Stress and Perceived Social Support Score

Category	Stress	Perceived social support
Mean	2.0094	5.1121
Standard deviation	0.59535	1.16816
Low	$X < 1.41405$	$X < 3.94394$
Averages	$1.41405 \leq X < 2.60475$	$3.94394 \leq X < 6.28026$
High	$2.60475 \leq X$	$6.28026 \leq X$

In empirical statistics, the perceived social support variable has significant other dimensions, the mean value is 5.2636, standard deviation = 1.56333, based on the formula in table 9 and obtained low = X <3.70027, medium = 3.70027≤ X<6.82693, high = 6.82693≤X. In empirical statistics, the perceived social support variable in the family dimension is 5,0422, standard deviation = 1.57650, based on the formula in table 9 and obtained low = X < 3.4657, medium = 3.4657≤ X < 6.6187, high = 6.6187≤X. In empirical statistics, the perceived social support variable in the dimensions of friends means the mean value is 5.0305, standard deviation = 1.32431, based on the formula in table 9 and obtained low = X <3.70619, medium = 3.70619≤ X<6.35481, high = 6.35481≤X

Table 2: Interpretation Norm for Perceived Social Support Dimension

Description	Significant Others	Family	Friends
Mean	5.2636	5.0422	5.0305
Standard deviation	1.56333	1.57650	1.32431
Low	X<3.70027	X<3.4657	X<3.70619
Averages	3.70027≤ X<6.82693	3.4657≤ X<6.6187	3.70619≤ X<6.35481
High	6.82693≤X	6.6187≤X	6.35481≤X

The empirical mean value of the stress variable is 2.0094 with a standard deviation of 0.59535. The average stress of the participants was at 1.41405 X < 2.60475. So it can be concluded that the average stress on research participants is in the moderate category.

Table 3: Descriptive Result of Stress

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Stress	0.2	4	2.0094	0.59535	Averages

The empirical mean value of the perceived social support variable is 5.1121 with a standard deviation of 1.16816. The average perceived social support is in the

category of 3.94394 X < 6.28026. So it can be concluded that on average the participants have perceived social support in the moderate category. On the other significant dimensions, the empirical mean is 5.2636 and the standard deviation is 1.56333. Average significant others dimensions 3.70027≤ X < 6.82693. So that it can be concluded that the average participants of the significant others dimension are in the medium category. On the family dimension, the empirical mean value is 5.0422 and the standard deviation is 1.57650. The average family dimension is in the range of 3.4657≤ X < 6.6187. So it can be concluded that the average family dimension participants are in the medium category. On the friends dimension, the empirical mean value is 5.03305 and the standard deviation is 1.32431. The average family dimension is 3.70619≤ X < 6.35481. So it can be concluded that the average participant dimension of friends is in the medium category.

Table 4: Descriptive Result of Perceive Social Support

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	Std.Deviation	Category
Perceived Social Support	1	7	5.1121	1.16816	Averages
Significant others	1	7	5.2636	1.56333	Averages
Family	1	7	5.0422	1.57650	Averages
Friends	1	7	5.0305	1.32431	Averages

The results of data analysis found that perceived social support played a role in stress (p=0.000<0.05). Researchers analyzed data on perceived social support, family dimension had a role in stress (p=0.000<0.05), perceived social support in friends dimension had a role in stress (p=0.000<0.05). However, the perceived social support dimension of significant others is not significant (p=0.054>0.05)

Table 5: Regression Test Perceived Social Support Towards Stress

Variable	R	R2	Beta	t	Sig.
Perceived Social Support	0.236	0.056	-0.236	-4.760	0.000
Significant others	0.098	0.010	-0.098	-1.933	0.054
Family	0.256	0.066	-0.256	-5.185	0.000
Friends	0.204	0.042	-0.204	-4.088	0.000

The results of data analysis found there is different stress based on gender. The mean scores of male was 1.9061 (SD=0.60352). The mean scores of female was 2.0632 (SD=0.58503). Data analysis using Independent Sample T-Test, the results of data analysis found Levene's Test value = 0.456> 0.05, it can be concluded that the data is homogeneous. The value of F=0.556, p=0.014<0.05, so it can be concluded that there are difference stress by gender during the pandemic.

Table 6: Stress by Gender

Gender	Stress		F	p
	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Male	1.9061	0.60352	0.556	0.014
Female	2.0632	0.58503		

4.2 Discussion

Perceived social support has been shown to play a role in stress during the pandemic in young adults (p=0.00<0.05). This is in line with research that social support is a protective psychosocial resource [19] as well as a buffer to make individuals more resilient when facing challenges [20]. In addition, social support social support helps others manage uncertainty as well as increases the perception of personal control over one's life [19]. Based on the social-cognitive model of emotion to stressors, individuals who receive social support can facilitate cognitive processing and adaptation to these stressors [21]. In addition, in line with the buffering hypothesis, perceived social support can support perceived stress and reduce the negative impact of external stressors [11].

Perceived social support has a small effect of 5.6% (R2=0.056) in reducing stress during the pandemic. This can be due to other influencing factors such as self-compassion, as in the study of Lim and Kartasasmita [22] self-compassion gave a 41.2% effect on stress. In addition, based on Shelly and Narang [23] empathy and altruism can make individuals reduce stress because individuals engage in activities that can make them better and release the tension and pressure they are experiencing. So it can be concluded that there are several factors that have a greater effect in reducing stress.

In perceived social support, the family dimension plays a role in reducing stress (p=0.00<0.05). This is because the family plays a role in building meaningful emotional relationships with family members [20]. Perceived social support, the family dimension has a higher effect than the other dimensions is 6.6% (R2 = 0.066). This is because during the pandemic, individuals spend more time at home interacting with their families. In addition, stress arising from the pandemic, the presence of a family can help individuals adapt by building a more positive outlook and modifying their views by increasing health, togetherness, and a sense of coherence [24]. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the presence of family closeness can help

reduce stress, plus during this pandemic, individuals spend more time at home than outside which makes individuals feel more supported by their families than others.

In perceived social support, the dimensions of friends play a role in reducing stress (p=0.00<0.05). This can be caused, the existence of friendships can develop a constructive coping style, reduced disengaged and externalising coping [25]. Like during a pandemic, which makes individuals experience economic and social crises. However, having close friendships can make individuals more resilient which can help individuals deal with stress during the pandemic. In addition, even during the pandemic, individuals practice social distancing, but with the development of technology, individuals can still maintain the quality of friendship through online media [8].

The perceived social support dimension of friends gives an effect of 4.2% (R2=0.042). Even during the pandemic, individuals can still interact because of technological advances. However, the limitations of electronic media can cause not all social support received to be effective [28]. Like two coins, although technology makes it easier for individuals to access social support, on the other hand it can make individuals feel lonely with social distancing [7]

In perceived social support, the significant others dimension is not significant in reducing stress (p=0.054>0.05). Based on Balzarini et al. [26] this can be because external stressors such as a pandemic can damage the quality of relationships. Poor relationship quality is influenced by how a person perceives their partner's response (the degree to which individuals believe their partner understands, validates or cares for them). When individuals perceive that their partner is less responsive, the quality of their relationship becomes worse when experiencing stressors due to COVID-19. In addition, couples who experience financial crises, lack of social relationships, when experiencing high stress will be at risk for relationship dissatisfaction and disputes or can be called stress spillover [27]. Based on the above statement it can be concluded, when someone is experiencing stress, individuals will tend to make negative attributions about their partner and more negative evaluations about their relationship.

Based on demographic data, it can be seen that participants experiencing stress do not have a history of covid-19 (88.6%), people around the participants have a history of covid-19 (71.4%), no one around the participants has died of covid-19 (64.3%). So it can be concluded that what causes participants to experience stress does not come from the direct effects of covid-19, but from other factors. These factors can include frequent media monitoring, isolation due to quarantine, not being able to be with loved ones, feelings of loneliness, fear of infection, lack of information and financial problems [29].

Based on demographic data, the majority of participants in this study were 22 years old who were in the young adult phase. Young adults are prone to stress because facing pressures related to life or work can cause high stress [20]. In line with this, early adult individuals experience life crises, due to life transitions such as relationships, education, or work [4]. So that the impact of Covid-19 has a very strong effect on young adulthoods.

In data analysis, it was found that there were differences in stress based on gender. The results of the study are in line with research that there are differences in the impact of stress on male and female [30]. Based on the results of this study, it was found that when women experience stress, it causes higher physical symptoms than men such as palpitations, shortness of breath, muscle tension, fatigue, headaches, sweating etc. Women are more likely to cause emotional symptoms than men, such as being more sensitive, worried, anxious, panicked, cynical, etc. However, when experiencing stress, men are more likely to experience behavioral symptoms than women, such as blaming other people or circumstances, running away from problems, being careless, etc.

In line with this, the stress experienced by women is caused by disrupted work due to covid-19 and women are often exposed to stress related to activities with their routine role functions [23]. Differences in the impact of stress from gender can also be caused by differences in the social environment, psychodynamics, cognitive processes, behavioral responses in dealing with stress, physiological factors (hormonal differences in women).

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, it is concluded that perceived social support plays a role and has a negative relationship with stress. When viewed from the dimensions of perceived social support, the dimensions of friends and family have a significant and negative relationship to stress. However, the significant others dimension has no significant towards stress. In the participants of this study, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic did not have a direct effect on stress.

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