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# Social Support and Quality of Life on Online-Learning University Students

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## ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia has encouraged every university to implement the Online-Learning method. However, this learning method might impact on quality of life of some students. Students may experience a lack of social support and have a poor quality of life. They tend to have difficulty completing their studies and are vulnerable to psychological problems. This study aims to describe the level of social support and quality of life of students involved in the Online-Learning method. This study recruited 263 students lived in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. The participants completed an online questionnaire measuring social support (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support; MSPSS) and quality of life (World Health Organization Quality of Life; WHOQOL-BREF). The results show that 67.7% of students get moderate social support. Significant others and friends are the most contributing aspect of social support of students during Online-Learning. This study found that 66.2% of students have a fairly good quality of life. The quality of the relationship with the environment is dominating the perceived quality of life. Further research can deepen the quality of life perceived by students through qualitative research to get a deeper picture of this.

**Keywords:** Social support, Quality of life, Online-Learning, University students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2020, The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as an emergency health condition at the beginning of 2020 [1]. COVID-19 cases in Indonesia have continued to increase. Based on data on August 11, 2021, there have been 3,749,446 people who have tested positive for the disease. The number of recovered patients is 3,211,078 people, with 112,198 die due to COVID-19 [2]. This incident prompted the obligation of restrictions and changes in daily life activities, including in the education sector. Indonesian Government Regulation Number 21/2020 [3] declares that online-learning used to be carrying out learning activities. Students who face changes in learning patterns from offline-learning methods (face-to-face) to online-learning methods may have difficulty adapting with the new situation. This change may impact the students, especially in terms of perceived quality of life. The application of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic caused a decrease in interaction with the environment outside the student's closest community, such as friends in the educational environment [4]. The students appear to have limited interaction to the

environment of family members during this period. This limited interaction might reduce social support and impacted to the quality of life of the students.

Social support is the support individuals receive from family, friends, and significant others [5,6]. Social support can be in the various forms of communication that assist individuals, both physically and psychologically, increasing self-control in individuals [7]. The social support provided to individuals can include appraisal support, tangible support, emotional support, and belonging or information support [8]. The existence of social support received by students can help students solve problems, adapt to changes and the environment, and improve the perceived quality of life [7,9,10]. Individuals who get high social support tend to show a high quality of life.

Quality of life is an individual's perception of his life, which includes four domains, namely physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, and environment [11]. The quality of life can be seen based on the cultural context, behavior, and value system of the individual. Expectations, pleasures, and

judgments that individuals have about their position in life also underlie the quality of life [12]. The quality of life of students can affect students' abilities in living their lives, including in academic life. Individuals who have a high quality of life tend to show symptoms of milder psychological problems than students who have a low quality of life [13,14]. However, pressure or stress related to academics, symptoms of depression, smoking behavior, and anxiety could influence student's quality of life [13,14,15,16].

Based on the explanation of social support and quality of life, it can be seen that both of them are several factors that can affect the ability of students to deal with academic life and prevent the emergence of disturbances in the psychological condition of students. Thus, this study aims to describe the level of social support and quality of life for students who undergo the online-learning method. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for further research related to social support and quality of life for students who undergo the online-learning method.

**2. METHODS**

**2.1 Participants**

Participants in this study were students, man and woman, aged from 17 to 25 years. Participants in this study will be selected based on several criteria, which are undergraduate students, involve in the online-learning method, live in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, or Bekasi areas, participants did not receive a clinical diagnosis from professionals, and willing to participate in the study. There were 370 participants were recruited. However, only 263 participants were met the criteria. Participants consisted of 84.4% women with an average age was 20.05 years; 71.9% of them were Muslim and 49.8% were Javanese. Most of the participants is in the second year of their education (25.1%) and live in Jakarta (31.9%).

**2.2 Study Design and Procedures**

This is a quantitative non-experimental study with purposive sampling method. Participants were recruited online using social media platform. Participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire via Google Forms. Data processing was carried out using the SPSS Program 24 version. The statistical analysis of this study was divided into three parts, which are testing the internal consistency and reliability, analysing the descriptive of demographic data, and comparing the mean of data using independent sample t-test.

**2.3 Measures**

Measurement of social support was carried out using The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) questionnaire developed by Zimet et al. [5] and translated into Indonesian. This questionnaire covers three aspects of social support and consists of 12 items with 5-point scales. The scores obtained will be divided into three categories: low social support, moderate social support, and high social support. This questionnaire shows the reliability coefficient with  $\alpha=0.835$ .

Meanwhile, the measurement of quality of life was using The World Health Organization Quality of Life brief version (WHOQOL-BREF), which was developed by WHO [17] and has been adapted into Indonesian by Mardiaty et al. [18]. This measuring tool covers four domains and measures two facets of quality of life in general, namely overall quality of life and general health. This instrument consists of 26 questions arranged on a Likert scale. The scores obtained are divided into five categories: very poor, poor, fairly good, good, and very good. This questionnaire shows the reliability coefficient with  $\alpha=0.870$ .

**3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

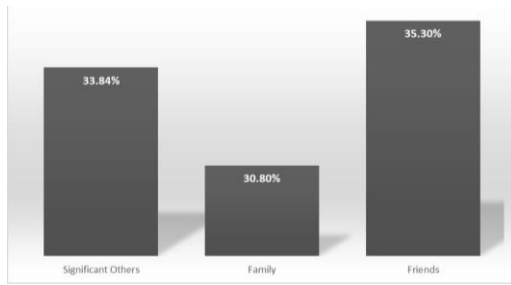
**3.1 Social Support among Online-Learning University Students**

Most students received social support at a moderate level (178 participants or 67.7%). Forty-three students (16.3%) with low social support and 42 (16.0%) received high social support. Based on the data, social support from friends dominates the social support received by students in the online-learning method (35.3%) and 33.8% from significant others. This result shows that despite the limitation of interaction with the environment outside the family [4], friends are the most significant source of social support.

Based on gender characteristics, men received higher social support than women. This result is different from previous research, which revealed that women received higher social support than men [19]. Based on age, participants aged 20-21 years received more social support. Furthermore, it appears that participants who are Buddhists get higher social support compared to other religions.

**Table 1.** Social Support Categorization

Score	Category	Total Participant
< 29.8	Low	43
29.8 – 46.5	Moderate	178
> 46.5	High	42



**Figure 1** Aspect of Social Support

Based on marital status, married participants received higher social support than unmarried participants. This result is in line with the research of Vaingankar et al. [20], which revealed that married status had a significant positive impact on an individual's perceived social support. Based on the participants' year of study, it appears that students who are undergoing lectures in the 4<sup>th</sup> year get higher social support than other years. Moreover, participants who live in Bogor get higher social support than in other areas.

**Table 2.** Social Support and Quality of Life Based on Demographic Data

Characteristic	Social Support			Quality of Life		
	Score	Category	Total Participant	Score	Category	Total Participant
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	39.80	Moderate	41	51.66	Fairly good	41
Female	37.91	Moderate	222	49.61	Fairly good	222
<b>Age</b>						
17 – 19 years old	37.45	Moderate	110	49.17	Fairly good	110
20 – 21 years old	39.61	Moderate	106	51.83	Fairly good	106
22 – 25 years old	36.81	Moderate	47	47.43	Fairly good	47
<b>Religion</b>						
Moslem	37.69	Moderate	189	49.63	Fairly good	189
Christian	38.78	Moderate	46	50.16	Fairly good	46
Catholic	41.45	Moderate	20	52.04	Fairly good	20
Buddha	41.80	Moderate	5	55.45	Fairly good	5
Confucianism	37.00	Moderate	1	40.75	Fairly good	1
Others	33.50	Moderate	2	43.00	Fairly good	2
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Not married yet	38.16	Moderate	261	49.84	Fairly good	261
Married	44.50	Moderate	2	62.50	Good	2
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Javanese	38.06	Moderate	131	50.66	Fairly good	131
Sundanese	36.63	Moderate	43	47.78	Fairly good	43
Betawi	41.59	Moderate	17	52.20	Fairly good	17
Batak	37.18	Moderate	22	48.97	Fairly good	22
Chinese	40.45	Moderate	29	52.02	Fairly good	29
Minahasan	47.60	High	5	55.10	Fairly good	5
Minang	34.83	Moderate	12	46.88	Fairly good	12
Malay	28.50	Moderate	2	41.63	Fairly good	2
Others	38.50	Moderate	2	46.25	Fairly good	2
<b>Years of Study</b>						
1	38.27	Moderate	56	49.71	Fairly good	56
2	36.98	Moderate	66	49.39	Fairly good	66
3	38.13	Moderate	63	50.83	Fairly good	63
4	40.35	Moderate	51	51.51	Fairly good	51
> 4	37.22	Moderate	27	46.65	Fairly good	27
<b>Domicile</b>						
Jakarta	38.31	Moderate	84	50.45	Fairly good	84
Bogor	39.78	Moderate	36	48.83	Fairly good	36
Depok	37.81	Moderate	32	50.37	Fairly good	32
Tangerang	35.21	Moderate	47	47.02	Fairly good	47
Bekasi	39.59	Moderate	64	51.79	Fairly good	64

### 3.2 Quality of Life among Online-Learning University Students

The study results indicate the level of quality of life of students. A total of 174 participants (66.2%) perceived a fairly good quality of life. Meanwhile, 19% of participants felt a poor quality of life, and another 14.8% felt a good quality of life. Mostly, the students have quality of life in the domain of environment (28.6%).

Based on gender characteristics, men had a higher quality of life than women. The research conducted by Kobayasi et al. [21] stated that female trainees showed the lower quality of life than men. Furthermore, participants aged 20 to 21 years showed a higher quality of life than other ages based on age characteristics.

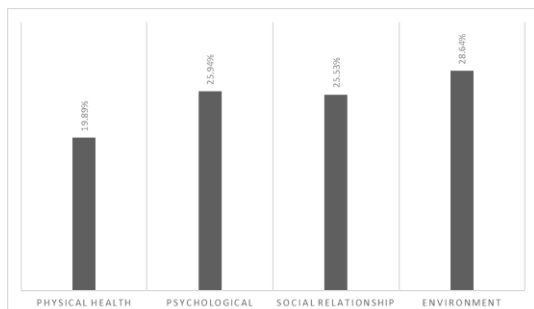
Just like in social support, Buddhist participants and Minahasan participants showed a higher quality of life. Based on marital status, married participants received higher social support than unmarried participants. This result is in line with research conducted by Han et al. [22], which revealed that married status had a significant positive impact on the quality of life felt by individuals. In addition, participants who live in Bekasi show a higher quality of life than in other areas.

### 4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To conclude, the participants received a moderate amount of social support and felt the quality of life at a fairly good level in undergoing the online-learning method.

**Table 3.** Quality of Life Categorization

Score	Category	Total Participant
0 – 20	Very poor	0
21 – 40	Poor	50
41 – 60	Fairly good	174
61 – 80	Good	39
81 – 100	Very good	0



**Figure 2** Domain of Quality of Life

Students who have the characteristics of being a man, aged 20 to 21 years, Buddhist, married, from a Minahasan background, are in their 4th year of academic, or live in Bogor or Bekasi tend to report higher levels of social support and quality of life. In addition, students felt that they get more social support from friends than from other. Furthermore, students felt their quality of life is in the domain of the environment.

Up until now, there is still little research conducted on students who undergo online-learning methods, which is an advantage of this research. Furthermore, only a few studies explore the quality of life and social support for students, especially those who undergo the online-learning method. Therefore, this study can contribute to the field of social psychology theory, especially to understand social support and quality of life of students.

Suggestion for future research is to examine related topics, focusing on qualitative design to get a bigger picture of student’s quality of life who undergo online learning using in-depth interviews.

### AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTION

ES carried out the studies, did literature search, designed the study, wrote the manuscript, did data collecting and data analysis. RR critically reviewed the manuscript. All authors contributed to manuscript’s revisions. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript for the publication.

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