

Life Satisfaction and Loneliness among College Students in Yogyakarta

Sakinah, Dean Nurul Azmi, Ahmad Zain Fahmi, Nur Widiasmara
Psychology Department, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences
Islamic University of Indonesia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Kaliurang 14,5 Yogyakarta, Indonesia
*Corresponding Author: 17320360@students.uii.ac.id

Abstract

Yogyakarta is the “city of students” in Indonesia. There is a lot of people decided to study in Yogyakarta. Especially, for them who have completed their high school education and start to entering college. They who have decided to move to Yogyakarta and start their study in college may feel loneliness because they have to left their hometown and adapt in new social life. This study presents to investigate the relationship between life satisfaction and loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. We hypothesized that there is a negative correlation between life satisfaction and loneliness. To measured life satisfaction we used Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener. To measured loneliness, we used De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale (Short Scale). The reliability coeficient of Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener was 0.765 ($\alpha = .765$). The reliability coeficient of De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale was 0.709 ($\alpha = .709$). In this study we used purposive sampling and the participants of this study were 301 college students in Yogyakarta. The participants were consist of 229 female students and 72 male students. This study was done by quantitative research to test empirically correlation between life satisfaction and loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. The duration of the study were 2 weeks. This analysis method used Spearman Correlation. We found that there was negative correlation between life satisfaction and loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. This research also found that life satisfaction significantly correlated with loneliness from the value of correlation $r = -0.373$ with the significance of $p = 0.00$, $p < 0.05$. The higher life satisfaction of college students, the lower loneliness. Otherwise, the lower life satisfaction of college students, the higher loneliness.

Keywords: Life satisfaction, loneliness, college students, Yogyakarta

Introduction

College students explained by KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 2016) as people who studied in college. Most of them are successful in academic and social. They tried to be well-adjusted youth who, anxious when they left home, looking for new friends and live with a roommate (Ruberman, 2014). Many people decided to study in Yogyakarta even though they have to leave their home. Yogyakarta has a brand image as “kota pelajar” or city of students. There are a lot of factor that support it such as there are a lot of education infrastructure (Haryono, 2009). College students who decided to study far from home have tendency to had loneliness. It may happened because the differences of environment between their home environment and college environment. Another factor is because they have to live far from their parents (Halim & Dariyo, 2017).

Loneliness is a general event; as many as 80% of those under 18 years old and 40% of adults over 65 years old inform being lonely at least sometimes, with ranks of loneliness gradually decreasing through the adult years and then increasing in old age (i.e.,

≥70 years old). The level of loneliness among college students in Indonesia showed in moderate and high level. 15% students were at high level of loneliness and 68% at moderate level of loneliness (Asih, 2017). Other research showed that 60% college students were at high level of loneliness (Saputri, Rahman, & Kurniadewi, 2012). Loneliness has negative impact for individual who suffer from it. Yu (2005) state that the fact is loneliness was always related with difficulties in peer relationship. Some researchers explained loneliness as an individual's subjective experience about less of satisfying human relationships, and loneliness would be a negative feeling causing distress to someone. Depression is also has a relation with loneliness. A person could be suffer from loneliness even though he or she is surrounded by many people (Savikko, Routasalo, Tilvis, Strandberg, and Pitkala, 2005).

We all had loneliness sometimes, but several people undergo it everyday for years on end. It is emotionally decreasing, interpersonally preventing, and psychologically regressing. We felt empty and very alone when we are lonely. Needs for intimacy are unfilled and unsatisfying. It is important for the professionals to understand the mental health condition especially for loneliness. Loneliness is an important indicator and factor for life satisfaction (Salimi, 2011). Loneliness has several variables which it related with, such as social anxiety (Lim, Rodebaugh, Zyphur, & Gleeson, 2016; Huan, Ang, & Chye, (2014), electronic communication with parents (Gentzler, Oberhauser, Westerman, & Nadorff, 2011), psychological well being (Halim & Dariyo, 2017; Chen, & Feeley, 2014), and life satisfaction (Ozben, 2013; Wang, Yuen, & Slaney, 2009). Loneliness has a negative correlation with life satisfaction (Ozben, 2013). It means if someone has a low life satisfaction, it may increases their loneliness.

It is important to understand that the judgment of how satisfied someone is with his or her condition is based on a comparison with a standard which each individual makes for him or herself; it is not externally enforced. Youth life satisfaction is more than just a result of several psychological condition (e.g. positive affect, self-esteem), it is also a predictor of psychological condition and psychosocial systems (e.g. depression, physical health) (Gilman, Meyers, & Perez, 2004). Satisfaction with life has been reported to be a buffer against negative effects of stress and the development of psychopathological behavior (e.g. Suldo & Huebner, 2004). lonely people report lower rates of life satisfaction (e.g., Gray, Ventis, & Hayslip, 1992; Kim, 1997; Neto, 1995). Measures between loneliness and reported life satisfaction among three cultural groups have been shown to correlate negatively.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study to find the relationship between loneliness and life satisfaction among college students in Yogyakarta.

Research Question

1. What is loneliness has a relationship with life satisfaction among college students in Yogyakarta?
2. What is there a relationship between two dimensions of loneliness and life satisfaction?

Methodology

Participant

Participant of this study were 301 college students, consist of 229 female and 72 male from Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Data was collected by use purposive technic sampling.

Through this sampling, the participants of this study were intentionally selected by certain characteristics that related to this study.

Measurement

This study was done by quantitative research used questionnaire to test empirically correlation between Life satisfaction and Loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. Life satisfaction scale was adapted from Satisfaction with Life Scale by Diener (1985). Satisfaction with Life Scale consist 5 items. Reliability coefficient of this scale after we got the research data was 0.765 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient). Loneliness scale was adapted from De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale by Jenny De Jong Gierveld. De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale consist 6 items. Reliability coefficient of this scale after we got the research data was 0.709 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient).

Statistical Analysis

This study used correlation analysis to analyse relation between life satisfaction and loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. This analysis method also used Spearman Correlation to correlate between factor.

Literature Review

Loneliness

Loneliness is an distressing, unhappy, jittery for someone (Hartog, Audy, & Cohen, 1980). Loneliness describe an interpersonal decrease that exists as an outcome of fewer or less satisfying personal relationships than a person desires. It increases as the discrepancy between what individuals expect and what they actually experience in their relationships increases (Peplau & Perlman, 1982). Weiss (1973) state that loneliness is a natural response of the individual to certain situations and not as a form of weakness.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is defined as an individual's cognitive judgment about proportion based on the congruence of their own living conditions with the standards (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffen, 1985). Shin and Johnson (1978, dalam) explain life satisfaction as "a general assessment of a person's quality of life based on his/her chosen criteria". Life satisfaction is one of three major indicators of well-being: 1) the presence of positive emotions 2) the absence of negative emotions and 3) cognitive component of life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). Lemon, Bengtson, & Peterson (1972) explained life satisfaction as the degree to which one is presently content or pleased with his general life situation.

Loneliness and Life Satisfaction

Many studies about loneliness and life satisfaction that showed correlataion between these two variables. Demirer, Bozoglan & Sahin (2013) did a research about loneliness and life satisfaction among teachers aged between 18 to 24. The result shown that loneliness and life satisfaction negatively correlated. The authors attribute the loneliness to a decrease in family communication, social activities, well-being and happiness (Demirer, Bozoglan & Sahin, 2013). Meanwhile life satisfaction is one of the three aspects of well being. Another research had the same result about loneliness and life satisfaction. There is a correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction among college students (Bozorgpour, & Salimi, 2012). The correlation was significant and negatively correlated.

Findings

This study aims to empirically test the relationship between life satisfaction and loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta students. Based on the data obtained, the result as follows.

Table 1
Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic Information	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	72	23.9
Female	229	76.1
School		
Private School	182	60.5
Public School	107	35.5
Academy	12	4.0
Monthly Funds		
< Rp. 1.000.000	104	34.5
Rp. 1.000.000 – 1.500.000	116	38.5
Rp. 1.500.000 – 2.000.000	48	15.9
> Rp. 2.000.000	33	11.0

Demographic information of participants in this study shown in Tabel 1. This study consisted 72 male students and 229 female students. There were 182 students from Private School, 107 students from Public School and 12 students from Academy. They were all placed in Yogyakarta region. Most of these students had Rp. 1.000.000 – 1.500.000 as their monthly funds (38.5%), 104 students had under Rp. 1.000.000 per month (34.5%), 48 students had Rp. 1.500.000 – 2.000.000 (15.9%), and 33 students had above than Rp. 2.000.000 as their monthly funds.

Table 2
Correlation between Life Satisfaction and Loneliness

Variable	N	R	Sig.	r ²
Life Satisfaction*Loneliness	301	-0.373**	0.00	0.139

As shown in Table 2, it is obtained that there is negative correlation between life satisfaction and loneliness and the correlation was very significant. This is indicated by the value of $r = -0.373$ with significance of $p < 0.01$. Although it correlates very significantly, life satisfaction only makes effective contribution in the amount of 13,9 % on loneliness on college students in Yogyakarta.

Table 3
Correlation between Life Satisfaction and Dimensions of Loneliness

Variable and Dimensions	N	R	Sig.
Life Satisfaction*Emotional Loneliness	301	-0.299**	0.000
Life Satisfaction*Social Loneliness		-0.310**	0.000

We did examine the dimensions of loneliness with life satisfaction. From Table 2, emotional loneliness and social loneliness both have very significantly correlated with life satisfaction. Both dimensions have negative correlation with life satisfaction. It can be seen from the amount of correlation that is obtained where life satisfaction and emotional loneliness had $r = -0.299$ with significance $p < 0.01$, and life satisfaction with social loneliness had $r = -0.310$ with significance $p < 0.01$.

Discussion

Discussion in this study will examine the correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction among college students in Yogyakarta. The result showed that loneliness has significantly correlates negatively with life satisfaction, this result answered the first research question (Q1). It is means that if the life satisfaction was low, the loneliness will increase. Otherwise, if the life satisfaction was high, the loneliness will decrease. This findings goes the same with the previous researchers (Ozben, 2013; Salimi, 2011; Wang, Yuen & Slaney, 2009; Çivitci & Çivitci, 2009) which shows that there is a relationship between life satisfaction and loneliness. People who felt lonely have commonly negative perception of themselves and the world (Perlman & Peplau, 1981); These negative subjective evaluations of these people from life lead to life dissatisfaction.

Moreover, it is also found from two dimensions of loneliness, either emotional loneliness and social loneliness has significantly correlated negatively with life satisfaction, this result answered the second research question of this study (Q2). This result supports previous researchers (Salimi, 2011; Bozorgpour, & Salimi, 2012). Social loneliness and emotional loneliness are different experience states. Social loneliness being more highly related to items that emerged to deal with aspects of contact with others (e.g., there are plenty of people I can lean on when I have problems, there are many people I can trust completely, there are enough people I feel close to), meanwhile emotional loneliness emerged to be more highly related to items dealing with intimate contact or relationship with other people (e.g., I experience a general sense of emptiness, I miss having people around me, I often feel rejected). Emotional loneliness happen when someone does not get the attachment and when someone experiences deficits in the quantity or quality from one's social relationships. Social loneliness is linked to the quantity and quality of friendship relationship (Russel, Cutrona, Rose, Yurko, 1984).

Salimi (2011) did the same research with different results. Previous research shown emotional loneliness had greater correlation with life satisfaction. From this study we did correlate the two dimensions of loneliness with life satisfaction. There shown that social loneliness had greater correlation ($r = -0.310$) with life satisfaction than the correlation between emotional loneliness ($r = -0.299$) and life satisfaction. It means that college students in Yogyakarta would had low satisfaction of life if they feel loneliness socially.

Limitations

Participants of this study didn't well balanced between female and male students and using purposive sampling method which can not be representating the population.

Recomendation

Further research who interested on the same topic may considering the number of research subjects because there might be differences between loneliness in female and male students.

Conclusion

According to the result above, it can be concluded that life satisfaction has significant negative relationship with loneliness on college students in Yogyakarta. The higher life satisfaction, the lower loneliness on college students. Otherwise, the lower life satisfaction, the higher loneliness on college students.

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