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Life Satisfaction and Loneliness Among College Students in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

Loneliness can be felt by anyone especially among teenagers, college students and young adults. It can also be felt even though they are surrounded by others and is a major setback for them because they feel that they lack in communication with others. This case may influence health, social interaction and behavior in their lives. The hypothesis in this study is that the individual satisfaction will be affected by the loneliness that they feel and vice versa. This study is determined to find the relationship between loneliness and life satisfaction among college students. This study is based on a quantitative approach with correlational results. The instruments used to obtain data is through a questionnaire. The result of the data shows that life satisfaction has significant negative correlation with loneliness among college student. For measuring level of life satisfaction, we used SWLS (Satisfaction With Life Scales) by Diener et al. (1985). For measuring the level of loneliness, we used Dejong Gierveld Loneliness Scale by Gierveld (2006). This study involves 251 participants that consists of college students from the academic year of 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. From the data analysis by using statistically pearson coefficient correlational formula showed that correlation value $r = -.258$ with $p = 0.00$, $P < 0.05$. From the data we have collected, we can conclude that the result is consistent with the study hypothesis that when a college student has a higher level of satisfaction the lower the level of loneliness will be. The result will be discussed in this study.

Keywords: Loneliness, life satisfaction, college students.

Introduction

Loneliness is a feeling that is often and most likely experienced by each and every human being in general throughout their life but to each individual it is experienced to a different extent. Loneliness according to Sullivan (1955), is defined as a very unpleasant experience which occurs when a person or individual fails to build close relationships with other people. However, it is not an abnormality if it is still in a low intensity. In the modern world we live in today, the total number of loneliness among college students are a minority. It is shown by how college students in general prefer to be with the presence of another individual or group of people, whether it be discussing the matters of college tasks, family problems, or even just for sharing stories between friends and colleagues.

While loneliness consists of a negative emotional response between the desired and achieved quality of social interactions. It can lead to low life satisfaction. Loneliness can be caused by multiple factors. Some individuals may experience this because they are unacknowledged by their friends, peers, social community, family, or even spouse. Individuals who are starting at new places will experience loneliness when in the process of adapting to their new surroundings.

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Loneliness is an event; experienced by as many as 80% of those who are between the ages of 18 and below and 40% consist of adults who are aged over 65 years old inform being lonely at least on some points in their life, with ranks of loneliness that is gradually decreasing through the adult years and increases as they age (i.e., ≥ 70 years of age). The level of loneliness among the college students in Indonesia results in a moderate and high level consisting 15% students who are experiencing a high level of loneliness and 68% of the students experiencing a moderate level of loneliness (Asih, 2017).

On the other hand, there are many ways we can define the meaning of life satisfaction. According to Andrew (1974), life satisfaction symbolizes as a thorough criteria or an exact outcome of the human experience. Life satisfaction is a thorough computation which consists of feelings and attitudes about an individual's life at a particular point in time which ranges from the negative to the positive point. In order to define the life satisfaction, it is required to define the satisfaction that is first proposed by Neutgarten in 1961. According to Neutgarten regarding satisfaction, it is the fulfillment of one's needs, wishes and wants. Life satisfaction is a result of a comparison or a situation between one's actual belongings (what she/he has now) and ones won expectation (what she/he wants).

In general, we all must have at least once in their lives experienced loneliness, but several people around the world undergo and fight to get through it everyday for years. we feel empty and lonely when we're alone. The need to feel intimate is unfulfilled and unsatisfying. Loneliness is an important indicator and factor in life satisfactory (Salimi, 2011). It is important to understand that the judgement of how satisfied someone is with his or her current condition is based solely on the comparison with a standard in which each individual creates for themselves. Youth life satisfaction is more than just the results of several psychological condition (e.g. self-esteem, positive affects), it also predicts psychological condition and psychosocial systems (e.g. physical health, depression) (Gilman, Meyers, & Perez, 2004).

Purpose of Study

The purpose to the making of this paper is to identify the relationship between the level of loneliness and the level of life satisfaction among college students throughout Yogyakarta.

Research Question

1. How does the level of loneliness among college students throughout Yogyakarta affect the level of their life satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship between both loneliness and the life satisfaction among college students in Yogyakarta?

Methodology

Participant

The participants of this study involved 251 students widespread throughout Yogyakarta Indonesia which consisted of 123 male and 128 female students. The data was collected by the use of purposeful sampling techniques. Through the sampling, the students who participated in this study were intentionally selected through certain characteristics that are relevant and related to this study.

Measurement

This study was produced through a quantitative research which used questionnaires to test the correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction among the college students in Yogyakarta. The loneliness scale used in this study was adapted from the De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale by De Jong Gierveld (2006). the scale adapted by De Jong consists of 6

items, and the reliability coefficient of this measurement after receiving the research data was 0.709 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient).

While the life satisfaction scale that was adapted was the SWLS (Satisfaction With Life Scales) by Diener et al (1985). this scale consists of 5 items, and the reliability coefficient of this measurement after receiving the research data was 0.765 (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient).

Statistical Analysis

This study was based on the correlation analysis to analyse the relations between life satisfaction and loneliness among the college students throughout Yogyakarta. In this specific study, the participants who agreed to help participate in this study were asked to fill an online questionnaire that was made specifically for this study. It contained questions asking about how they feel towards their life, whether they feel lonely or satisfied and how life satisfaction relates to loneliness.

Literature Review

Loneliness

Loneliness in other words could be defined as an unpleasant emotional response to isolation. It includes feelings of anxiety towards the lack of communication or social interaction with other beings. Loneliness comes as the outcome from the less or fewer personal relationships which failed to achieve the satisfactory feeling needed. It increases when the difference between what the individuals expect and what they actually experience in reality from their relationship increases (Peplau & Perlman, 1982).

Life Satisfaction

Thoroughly speaking, life satisfaction depends on one's subjective and cognitive interpretation. Moreover, the life satisfaction of an individual is based on their criteria about what their definition of a good life is. It is also based on one's overall evaluation of some of the aspects of quality in their life, which includes family, friends, school etc. (Christopher 1999).

Life satisfaction or satisfaction itself is defined as the fulfillment of one's need, wishes and wants. The life satisfaction of an individual is the result of a comparison between their expectations (what they want), and their actual belongings (what they have now). Life satisfaction of an individual indicates the substantial outcome of the comparison between their expectations and their present position. Generally speaking, it encompasses an individual whole life period and implies as an unspecific fulfillment for a situation, but covering wholly throughout one's life. It too expresses the feeling of happiness, optimism etc. (Vara, 1999).

As stated by Diener et al (1985), in his research on happiness, he concluded that "a person who has the most advantages thrown in his life is the happiest". He states that a happy and joyful person is one who is young, healthy, well-educated, wealthy, light-hearted, religious, bright and has their own desires to achieve in life.

Loneliness and Life Satisfaction

There are many studies that conclude that there is a correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction. A research on loneliness and life satisfaction was done based on teachers aged between 18 to 24 years of age (Demirer, Bozoglan & Sahin, 2013). On the other hand, life satisfaction is one of the three aspects of well-being. In another research it showed the same results as the one before. That there is a correlation between loneliness and life satisfaction (Bozorgpour, & Salimi, 2012). the study concluded a negative correlation.

Findings

Table 1

Result of Correlation between Life satisfaction and Loneliness (Spearman Correlation)

Variable	r	p
Life Satisfaction	-0.258	0.00 (P < 0.05)
*Loneliness		

As shown in the data on table 1, we can conclude that between loneliness and life satisfaction have significantly negative correlation. This is proved by the value of $r = -0.258$ and the significant of $p < 0.05$. We obtain the data from college students in Yogyakarta. College students in Yogyakarta shows they feel more life satisfaction than loneliness in their life.

Discussion

The result of this specific research has been evaluated and concluded as what has been mentioned in the study above. The analysis has not yet shown a meaningful difference between life satisfaction and gender. In the modern world we live in today, both female and male carry out an equal amount of responsibilities regarding life. An absence or void of the difference between both genders may stem from the fact that they both experience an amount of struggle in similar daily life concerns, such as graduating school, passing examinations, finding jobs, succeeding in their career and establishing good job relations. Many studies have acknowledged that stress factors as a part in life, such as influencing an individual's psychological well-being, psychological stress and the level of optimism. In other words, they contribute in affecting life satisfaction. Based on Azimeh Salimi's research, he also concluded that between life satisfaction and loneliness there is a negative correlation. Which means that there is a relation between life satisfaction and loneliness.

The data showed as the result of the correlation between life satisfaction and loneliness is as negative relation. Meaning that the more an individual's level of life satisfaction increase the less lonely they will feel. Otherwise, the more loneliness they feel the fewer amount of life satisfaction they're experiencing.

It is found that the two dimensions of loneliness, emotional loneliness and social loneliness correlated negatively with life satisfaction which answers the second question of this study. The result supports previous researchers (Salimi, 2011; Bozorgpour & Salimi 2012). Social loneliness and emotional loneliness are two different state of experiences with social loneliness being related to deal aspects of contact with others (e.g., there are people who I feel comfortable talking about my problems, there are people who have my trust completely). On the other hand, emotional loneliness is associated with intimate contact or relationship with other people (e.g., I experience emptiness even though people are around me, I miss having people around me and I usually feel rejected).

From a research that has been done previously, it has been indicated that life satisfaction has been affected by these stress factors and there has been no meaningful difference in terms of the gender about the life satisfaction (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Chemers et al., 2001; Cheier & Carver, 1992).

Salimi (2011) did the same research and concluded a different result with his previous research's showing that emotional loneliness has a greater correlation with life satisfaction.

Limitations

The disproportion of ratio between the total participants from both male and female who took part in this study produced unequal results that is why the outcome cannot be properly represented.

Recommendation

Other observers who were interested in observing some research with the same topic should consider choosing a more specific subject or topic, due to the possible results of a comparison between life satisfaction and loneliness that are different at each age.

Conclusion

It is proven that the level of loneliness among college students affect the level of their life satisfaction when a students' level of loneliness decreases then it defines that they're satisfied with their life. If not, then the lower level of satisfactory will define that the student feels lonely. Someone with a high level of life satisfaction will not feel lonely because otherwise they should feel dissatisfied with their life. Through this, we can also conclude that there is a relationship shown between life satisfaction and loneliness which is proved through our findings table.

According to the result that has been discussed above, it can be concluded that life satisfaction has a negative correlation with loneliness among college students in Yogyakarta. The higher the satisfaction, the lower the level of loneliness and also otherwise.

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