Psychological Distress of Vocational Students Who Carry Out Learning From Home in Kota Jambi During the Pandemic Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

Problems that arise in students who carry out the learning process from home are constrained by economic factors such as the costs incurred for participating in online learning which triggers student anxiety. Then the learning task that is considered ineffective triggers student stress. Stress that is not handled properly can lead to depression. The obstacles that arise during the learning process from home produce difficult pressure to trigger psychological distress. Psychological distress is a general concept that refers to emotional suffering associated with stressors and demands that are difficult to overcome in everyday life. This study aims to see the psychological distress of vocational students during the covid 19 pandemic which can be useful as intervention data for practitioners and the school. This type of research is quantitative descriptive using convenience sampling technique method. The statistical technique used is non-parametric. This study was conducted on 274 respondents aged 14-18 years at a state vocational school in Jambi City. The research instrument used the DASS-42 questionnaire which has been adapted into Indonesian. The results showed that the majority of the respondents' levels of depression were normal depression as many as 183 respondents (66.8%), the respondents' anxiety levels on normal anxiety were 139 respondents (50.7%), the respondents' stress levels on normal stress were 179 respondents (65.3%). The study found that most respondents had average levels of depression, anxiety, and stress that tended to be normal.

Keywords: psychological distress, vocational student, covid-19

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid virus has spread all over the world since the beginning of 2020. Covid attacks human health to increase the death rate [1]. In Indonesia, as many as 200 thousand people have been confirmed to be exposed to Covid, 54 thousand active cases, 158,000 recovered, and 8 thousand who died based on data in September [2]. The government is taking progressive actions to reduce the spread of the virus through limiting society activities outside the home by issuing strict policies through large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) to reduce the spread of Covid-19 [3]. The Jambi Provincial Government has showed efforts to support the PSBB movement in the education sector through the Jambi Governor's Circular Number 939/SE/DISDIK-2.1/III/2020 from March 18 to May 29, 2020 carried out by self-study at home [4].

The process of self-study at home using learning methods by online, it refers to the use of internet technology to help improve knowledge and performance [5]. Students who learn by online, it covers all educational units, one of which is Vocational School. Vocational school involves a lot of practice because the education unit focuses on vocational competence [6]. In its implementation, the effectiveness of learning are influenced by supporting factors which is determined by technological advances such as the availability of computers, the internet, and the ability of educators to deliver material and the creation of online learning interactions [7][8][9]. Students who take online classes engage in reasoning and are less likely to engage in collaborative learning in student-faculty interactions, diverse discussions with others. So that the drawback of online learning lies in the low quality of practice, an obstacle for lessons that require certain involvement [10].

This drawback is one of the factors that hampers the learning process from home for vocational students who emphasize practical learning. Learning outcomes from the process of academic activities are influenced by internal factors, one of which is anxiety [11]. Anxiety is a future-oriented mood state associated with preparation for possible danger [12] characterized by feelings of tension and fear [13]. Previous research found that anxiety from academic activities, student anxiety is also related to family economic factors and factors exposed to the covid virus [14]. Economic factors trigger anxiety in students because families with low economies have difficulty buying quotas

in order to participate in online learning [3]. If these demands cannot be met, it causes a prolonged sense of anxiety. If anxiety occurs continuously causing disturbing stress [15]. In addition, students' stress comes from other factors such as learning assignments. Previous research found that the main factor causing student stress in online learning lies in the learning task [16]. Learning assignments are often given heavy tasks that are not accompanied by guidance from the teaching staff [17]. This causes students to find it difficult to complete learning tasks. Stress involves a biological defense process known as a psychological process called coping [18]. Stress can have an impact on individuals physically, psychologically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually [19]. If students are not able to coping, it can lead to serious psychological problems such as depression [15]. Learning tasks also cause mood changes [3]. So the impact of prolonged stress causes depression. Mood changes are one of the hallmarks of depressive disorders which are also characterized by loss of joy/excitement [20] including deep sadness, fatigue and low energy [21].

Barriers to following the learning process from home can lead to the difficult pressure due to the learning process from home causing depression, anxiety, and stress. Previous research found students evaluated during the pandemic period showed significantly higher levels of anxiety, depression, and stress [22]. This is caused by barriers such as learning performance, one-way instruction, and the costs incurred to carry out the online learning process which have relation to students' psychological distress, these challenges make students frustrated in completing their learning smoothly [23].

Psychological distress or it is called as psychological stress is a general concept that refers to emotional suffering associated with stressors and demands that are difficult to cope with in daily life, characterized by symptoms of depression and anxiety and are associated with stress and burnout [24]. Psychological distress involves negative affect which includes negative emotions that reflect subjective distress [25]. Stressful events often trigger episodes of anxiety and depression and are also considered to lead to a typical stress response [26].

Regarding to the previous explanation, the researcher is interested to find out the description of psychological distress in students of a vocational school in Jambi who are studying from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study aims to see the psychological distress of vocational students which can be useful as intervention data for practitioners and the school during the covid 19 pandemic.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design and Respondents

This research was descriptive quantitative using non-random sampling technique, namely convenience sampling. This study used non-parametric statistical techniques for different tests of additional data. The measuring instrument used has its own norm so that the data would be calculated based on the norm from DASS-42.

The characteristics of the respondents consist of: First, students who are currently studying at a vocational high school in Jambi; Second, students who are in grades X to XII with various vocational; Third, students who are studying from home; Fourth, male and female. The researcher does not limit the elements of race, culture, ethnicity, religion, and economy.

The total respondents were 274 students. The general description of the respondents was divided into gender, age, grade level, vocational type, and completeness of facilities for participating in online learning, opinions about the effectiveness of distance learning. The overall picture of the respondents can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. General Description of Respondents

Respondent Characteristics		N (274)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	85	31
	Female	189	69
Age (years)	14	13	4,7
	15	89	32,5
	16	113	41,2
	17	52	19
	18	7	2,6
Grade	X	109	39,8
	XI	119	43,4
	XII	46	16,8
Major	Institutional Financial Accounting	96	35
	Automation and office governance	34	12,4
	Online Business and Marketing	22	8
	Graphics	23	8,4
	Travel agent	30	10,9
	Multimedia	31	11,3
	Software engineering	12	4,4
	Broadcasting	21	7,7
	Computer network engineering	5	1,8
Have Facility for Online Learning	Yes	199	72,6
	No	75	27,4

2.2. Measuring the Reliability of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 . Questionnaire

The research instrument to measure psychological distress used the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 (DASS-42) by Lovibond and Lovibond which consisted of 42 items and it consisted of 3 dimensions, namely depression, anxiety, and stress which had been adapted into Indonesian by Damanik. DASS-42 used a Likert scale consisting of zero to three. The results of the reliability test on the depression dimension get cronbach's alpha of 0.929, on the anxiety dimension the cronbach's alpha value of 0.861, and on the stress dimension the cronbach's alpha of 0.923. Then the researcher conducted face validity to five participants to see the clarity of the items from the measuring instrument, the items were clear and understandable. Thus, it can be seen that each item is valid and reliable.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher calculated the respondents' DASS-42 scores by adding the scores of each relevant item based on the norms on the measuring instrument. There are five categories at the instrument level, namely normal, mild, moderate, severe, very severe.

Table 2. Severity Level of Depression

Severity	N	Percentage
Normal	183	66,8%
Mild	33	12%
Moderate	28	10,2%
Severe	14	5,1%
Extremely Severe	16	5,8%

Table 3. Severity Levels of Anxiety

Severity	N	Percentage
Normal	139	50,7%
Mild	26	9,5%
Moderate	61	22,3%
Severe	28	10,2%
Extremely Severe	20	7,3%

Table 4. *Severity Levels of Stress*

Severity	N	Percentage
Normal	179	65,3%
Mild	31	11,3%
Moderate	34	12,4%
Severe	19	6,9%
Extremely Severe	11	4%

Data obtained that respondent who experienced depression at normal levels were 183 respondents while mild to very severe levels were 91 respondents with severe depression levels from 14 respondents with a percentage of 5.1% and very severe depression levels amounting to 16 people with a percentage of 5. 8%. Most of the respondents were at a normal level of depression.

The results of the respondents scores regarding anxiety found that respondents with normal anxiety levels were 179 respondents while respondents from mild to very severe levels were 95 people with severe anxiety levels as many as 28 people with a percentage of 10.2% and very severe anxiety levels of 20 people with a percentage of 7.3 %. The highest subject score is 39 which is at a very severe level of anxiety. Most of the respondents were at a normal level of anxiety.

At the stress level, it was revealed that respondents at normal levels were 179 respondents, while from mild to very severe levels were 95 respondents with severe stress as many as 19 people with a percentage of 6.9% and respondents with very severe stress were 11 people with a percentage of 4%. The highest score of the subject was 42 which was at a very severe stress level. Most of the respondents were at normal stress levels.

The study found that most respondents had average levels of depression, anxiety, and stress that tended to be normal. This can be due to the fact that this pandemic has been going on for a long time so that the school and government can anticipate obstacles to the learning process from home. For example, government assistance for free quotas and the other forms of assistance. So that most of the respondents did not have difficulty accessing the internet and this could reduce the anxiety of the respondents. Then, respondents may have succeeded in conduting coping as a process of individuals who have attempted to manage distress [18].

3.1. Item Overview of Each Dimension

Researcher analyzed each item between dimensions to see a clearer overview of the variables. The study used the mean rank and it aimed to discover the average rank in the form of ranking so that it can describe which items form the most distress of respondents. It can be seen more clearly in table 5.

Table 5. Description of Dimensional Item on Psychological Distress Variables

Dimensions	*Mean Rank*	Item Number	Statement
Depression	9,58	13	I felt sad and depressed
Anxiety	10,76	9	I found myself in situations that made me so anxious I was most relieved when they ended
Stress	9,16	11	I found myself getting upset rather easily

The overview of respondents on the depression dimension tends to feel depressed such as sad and depressed during the learning process from home. Depression is characterized by having deep sadness, inability to experience pleasure, fatigue and low energy as well as physical aches and pains [21]. In the dimension of anxiety, respondents tend to feel anxious because respondents feel they are in a situation that makes them very anxious and will feel very relieved when all this ends. Previous research has found that economic effects such as stability of family income, effects in daily life regarding anxiety about being exposed to COVID, and delays in academic activities are correlated with student anxiety in the midst of this pandemic [14]. The respondent argued that the stress dimension tends to feel easily irritated. Stress is a non-specific body response to any disturbed body needs, stress has an impact on individuals physically, psychologically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually [19]. Developments arising from the Covid-19 pandemic situation are known to cause stress in the form of resentment in the respondents of this study.

3.2. Additional Analysis Based on Demographic Data

Researcher also adds analysis based on demographic data to add and complement the results of the previous analysis. Researcher also analyzes the differences by gender. It can be seen in table 6.

Table 6. Psychological Distress Difference Test With Gender

Dimensions		Gender	
		Male	Female
Depression	*Mean Rank*	132,36	139,81
	p	0,471	
Anxiety	*Mean Rank*	121,65	144,63
	p	0,026	
Stress	*Mean Rank*	121,26	144,80
	p	0,023	

There is no significant difference in the dimensions of depression. In the dimension of anxiety, the significance value of $p = 0.026 < 0.05$. Dealing with these data, it can be concluded that the level of anxiety in male respondents is significantly lower than female respondents. On the stress dimension, the significance value of $p = 0.023 < 0.05$ was obtained. This shows that the stress level of male respondents is significantly lower than female respondents. Previous studies have found that the level of psychological distress for female adolescents tends to be higher than male adolescents [28] [29] [30]. Even based on the results of retrospective data has showed that at the age of 6 years, women are twice as likely to experience anxiety disorders as men [12].

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research analysis dealing with the psychological distress of students at a vocational school in Jambi who carried out the learning process from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was found that the psychological distress of vocational students who took part in the learning process from home had an average level of psychological distress that tended to be normal.

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