Is it true that students' mental health is a problem? A Literature Study of the Causes of Mental Health Problems

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ABSTRACT

One of the factors that determine whether teenagers are more vulnerable to mental disorders is that teenagers tend to have explosive emotional outbursts. One of the causes of psychological disturbance in this group of students is excessive workload. This researcher used the literature review or literature study method. Through this literature review, the author will find various data and information that can be used through various journals and books as answers to the problems that the author is studying. This research aims to find out how to prevent mental health problems experienced by students. The results of this research are that the causes of mental health refer to individual conditions that facilitate progress in all dimensions of development, such as physical, intelligence, and emotional, towards their best potential which is in line with the development of others. Aspects of mental health also include efforts to manage stress, difficulties in adaptation, interactions with other people, and decision-making processes.

Students feel that the final assignment is quite a heavy burden. Anxiety is a personal sensation related to feelings of tension, restlessness, and worry associated with increased nervous system activity which causes anxiety. The impact felt by students will cause sleep disturbances, lack of rest time, and unhealthy eating patterns.

KEYWORDS
Mental Health
Psychology
Higher Education

Introduction

The issue of mental health has always been a crucial issue in Indonesia. Because the most important component in realizing comprehensive health starts from mental health itself [1]. This means that mental health is always very closely related to physical health. Impaired mental health has an influence on reducing the immune response in a person's body [2]. So
maintaining mental health is a necessity and anticipating things that cause disruption to physical health.

According to Law number 36 of 2009 article 1 which defines Health, namely "Health is a healthy condition, both physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially which enables everyone to live a socially and economically productive life". Mental health is a person's condition that shows psychological well-being which can be seen from his ability to manage stress, feelings, thoughts, and emotions. A stable mental health condition is also reflected in a person's ability to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships and overcome the challenges of daily life with good adaptability.

Currently, mental health is considered a sensitive topic in Indonesian society, so often individuals who experience mental health problems or disorders feel awkward or prevented from seeking professional help, such as consulting a psychologist. This is what has become a taboo among society in dealing with mental health. Many people think that mental health is not important, especially if it is handled by experts. Therefore, the increase in the number of individuals experiencing mental health disorders emphasizes the importance of mental health awareness for everyone.

Someone who has good mental health can utilize their abilities to overcome challenges in life and establish good relationships with other people. Mental health is influenced by two main aspects: 1) Internal aspects, including individual characteristics such as personality, physical and psychological health, level of life satisfaction, ability to handle problems, and religion; 2) External aspects, which include factors such as social, economic, cultural, environmental, political conditions and other factors. Conditions that attract attention arise from teenagers who have a high chance of being mentally disturbed. One of the factors that determine whether teenagers are more vulnerable to mental disorders is that teenagers tend to have explosive emotional outbursts. Apart from that, parental parenting factors influence the mental health of teenagers.

Similar conditions are often experienced by people in late adulthood, namely 18 years to 25 years. Late adulthood tends to have a greater risk of developing mental disorders, the reason is because this period is a transition period between early adulthood and late adulthood which is considered to have a lot of instability in life. This instability then makes people in early adulthood more likely to have mental disorders. One of the groups included in late adulthood is students.

Students are a group with an average age range of 18-25 years and are vulnerable to psychological disorders. One of the causes of psychological disturbance in this group of students is excessive workload. Excessive workload here means a collection of assignments that students must complete, but exceeds reasonable limits. Often this makes students feel overwhelmed by the assignments given. However, when confirming with 3 lecturer representatives at one of the universities in Sukabumi district, they said the assignments given were within reasonable limits such as only being given assignments in the form of observations, practice, and also assignments in the form of papers. However, at the final assignment stage, the three lecturers had the same view, namely that the students they supervised were given a timeline for the work period and also a guidance schedule. However, the students they supervise often do not follow the schedule and revision notes that have been given, they tend to be indifferent and will start to panic if the final thesis exam schedule is approaching.

Based on initial observations, according to their version, excessive workload has an impact on students' mental health where students face changing emotions, excessive anxiety, and feelings of wanting to give up on life. Apart from that, the excessive assignments given make students feel stress, worry, and fear about the grades given by lecturers to these assignments. A high mental workload is also felt due to the piling up of assignments so students feel overwhelmed.

This phenomenon of giving excessive tasks often results in victims. Quoted from CNN Indonesia, a student in Yogyakarta committed suicide allegedly because of stress from mounting assignments. Apart from that, news by Kompas.com. which stated that a
student in Palangkaraya committed suicide due to stress due to a pile of assignments that were beyond his control [18][9]. Another suicide case emerged in Makasar, according to kumparan.com, a student ended his life allegedly because of piling up assignments [19].

The cases summarized in this news are only a handful of the many cases of students experiencing mental disorders caused by mounting assignments. This is certainly a problem that must be solved so that these incidents do not happen again. The topic of mental health is an interesting topic to study, to what extent a lot of lecture assignments can affect the mental health of a group of students.

Method

The research method used is a literature review or literature study. According to [20], a literature study is obtaining data by carrying out an in-depth analysis of books, literature, notes, and reports that are relevant to the issue being handled. Through this literature review, the author will find various data and information that can be used through various journals and books as answers to the problems that the author is studying, namely solving problems related to mental health. A literature review is considered important because it provides a basis for researchers as a reference to explain the results to be researched [21]. The purpose of using the literature study method in this research is as an initial stage in research planning, where reading materials are used to collect information without the need to go directly to the field.

1. Result and Discussion

3.1. Understanding Mental Health and the Impact of Many Tasks on Students

Mental health is an important aspect of a person's well-being because it includes emotional, psychological, and social balance that influences the way individuals think, feel, and behave daily. Mental health refers to the true balance between psychological functions and the adaptation that occurs between an individual and himself and his environment [22]. Previously, only individuals experiencing mental health problems were considered to require mental health attention, whereas, for most people, this was considered to be of little importance. However, this view has changed, now that awareness about mental health has become widespread, it is recognized that it is relevant not only for those experiencing mental disorders but also for individuals who take good care of their mental health [23]. In this way, mental health is a very important part of every social creature in creating overall health. [24]–[26].

Mental health refers to an individual's condition that facilitates progress in all dimensions of development, such as physical, intellectual, and emotional, towards their best potential in line with the development of others. [23], [26]. Aspects of mental health also include efforts to manage stress, difficulties in adaptation, interactions with other people, and decision-making processes. When facing a final assignment, students often experience boredom because they face various obstacles in the process. That way, students sometimes have difficulty controlling themselves so they can concentrate fully on completing their final assignments [14].

Completion of the final assignment is one of the main requirements for students who are in their final semester to complete their study program and obtain a degree. Generally, final assignments are carried out at the final stage of study, after students have completed most of the specified study requirements. So this is a factor that sometimes makes it difficult for students to focus when working on their final assignments. When completing their final assignment, students will be guided by a supervisor who will assist in conducting research. Apart from that, students are also expected to follow the regulations and guidelines that apply at their respective institutions [23].

Every social creature wants to have a healthy state within himself, both physically and mentally, because this can improve the quality of his life. In contrast to the situation in Indonesia, there are still many people who ignore their mental health conditions, including students. Several mental health problems that are often associated with students have...
become issues that are used as material for discussion [27]. Students are often faced with great academic pressure, one of which comes from the number of assignments they have to complete during their studies. The academic tasks required of students often trigger high levels of stress, worry, and other mental health symptoms.

A psychologist from Education from LPT University of Indonesia said that if students are given a regular study schedule, it will bring various benefits and students will be able to manage their time more effectively, and can review the material they have previously studied. When an assignment is not by the proportions, it can have a negative impact. Excessive workloads have the potential to make students feel stressed, which can then reduce their interest in studying because they feel tired and bored. In addition, an increase in the number of assignments can hurt health, especially if assignments are given suddenly and simultaneously with other assignments, disrupting students’ eating and sleeping patterns [28].

3.2. Characteristics Of Mental Health Problems

For students, it turns out that there are more and more assignments and the accumulation of assignments will feel quite heavy. The difficulties students are experiencing can cause feelings of anxiety and despair so that they think they will not be on time to complete their assignments [29]. Anxiety is a personal sensation related to feelings of tension, fear, restlessness, and worry associated with increased nervous system activity [30]. Anxiety is also one of the characteristics of mental health problems experienced by students in the final stages of their studies when facing their final assignment or thesis. Students feel that the final assignment is a heavy burden that requires completion independently. Anxiety can cause headaches, difficulty sleeping, restlessness, nervousness, fatigue, feelings of hopelessness, dizziness, confusion, and irritability towards other people [31].

The feeling that students feel apart from anxiety is that students feel bored when working on their final assignment. The feeling of boredom that students experience will greatly impact their daily activities [14]. Saturation is a feeling of boredom that arises in students. Initially, this feeling of boredom appears based on several things, such as lack of good communication with parents, poor communication with lecturers because they often feel awkward, lack of appreciation or motivation from people around them, excessive assignments so that students find it difficult to manage their time, and the injustice given by lecturers to their students which creates a feeling of injustice towards students who are closer to them.

This affects students’ daily lives. Students will feel less enthusiastic about carrying out their activities, their life patterns will change, and their break times will be messy [32]. Academic assignments and requirements along with various problems faced by students can cause excessive levels of stress and can be felt by them. Every semester, the number of students experiencing academic stress continues to increase [33]. Academic stress is the type of stress most often experienced by students. Stress is an event that has a negative nature or detrimental impact that can threaten and endanger individuals, including students who are studying at university [28]

3.3. Impact Of Mental Health Problems

The impact felt by students will be sleep disturbances, lack of rest time, and unhealthy eating patterns. The sleep disorder that is often encountered by students is insomnia. Insomnia is the inability to meet sleep needs both in terms of quality and quantity. There are three types of insomnia, namely difficulty maintaining sleep or waking up frequently, waking up too early and not being able to go back to sleep, and difficulty starting to sleep [34]. This kind of situation can be caused by excessive pressure and stress related to college assignments. This can result in a lack of sleep, which can ultimately increase levels of anxiety and depression.

The next impact is a lack of rest time, students who are too busy with coursework tend to ignore the need for adequate rest. Lack of sleep can result in several health problems, including decreased brain performance, increased risk of heart disease, and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Students are often caught up in activities that are
tiring and take up a lot of time and thought, while the results are not necessarily in line with expectations. The quality of their sleep is disturbed because of the demands of daily activities which reduce their rest time. [35].

Lack of rest hours, in this case sleeping hours, can cause an increase in calorie intake to decrease due to the lack of limited rest time [36]. Lack of sleep can influence eating habits and unhealthy food choices, which in the end can worsen health conditions. In laboratory research, delaying bedtime until 04.00 in the morning increased daily calorie intake by 550 kilocalories, especially from foods high in fat [37]. Piling up assignments often encourages students to consume unhealthy food as a form of escape or comfort. As a result, an unbalanced diet can become a habit that is detrimental to their health.

Students will feel uncomfortable when carrying out their daily lives if they feel stressed and anxious. Apart from that feeling, students can also experience depression. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), depression is a mental condition characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, loss of interest in activities usually enjoyed, and difficulty carrying out daily tasks for at least two weeks. Depression can arise from heavy emotional burdens or from periods of stress and anxiety that persist over long periods. Everyone can experience depression when facing significant stress in their life. People who experience depression often have difficulty feeling optimistic and may be at risk of detrimental behavior such as suicide [27].

3.4. Solutions To Mental Health Problems

Sad Mental health is very important to maintain, especially for students who are pursuing higher education. Mental health symptoms that often occur in students, such as anxiety, difficulty dealing with stress, and depression, are important for finding appropriate solutions. Through regular physical activity, such as light exercise every day, students can stimulate the release of endorphins which contribute to feelings of happiness, improved sleep quality, and better focus.

The role of the family has an important role as the main place of protection with parents’ awareness and concern for the existence of adolescent mental health issues. Research findings from the National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) show that 20 percent of families will seek help from schools, schools, and the community. Education regarding mental health must also be understood by everyone so that they can know and respond to situations or individuals [38].

Preventing mental health for students is very important to maintain so that students will not easily have problems regarding mental health. According to Uswatun Hasanah, Mental Nursing Lecturer at Muhammadiyah University Surabaya, maintaining mental health for students is as follows: [39], [40].

1. Understanding Ourselves
   One of the first steps is for students to have a good understanding of their body condition, including physical and mental. Thus, when there are signs of physical or mental disorders, students will be more alert. This allows them to take preventative steps, address worsening symptoms, or make informed decisions in seeking help.

2. Increase Relationships
   Students being able to form and strengthen relationships with an environment that provides support is key. A healthy atmosphere and positive interactions between individuals are very important in improving students’ mental well-being.

3. Time Management
   After entering college, students will experience a transition period which includes an increased academic load, a busy class schedule, as well as various organizational and extracurricular activities. Apart from that, there are various
other activities that new students want to take part in. To avoid stress, you need the ability to manage time, set priorities, and focus on essential things first.

4. Adopt a Healthy Lifestyle
Adopting a healthy lifestyle such as eating nutritious food, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly are useful steps. This action supports the production of happiness hormones in the body, which can improve mood and reduce symptoms of anxiety, anger, depression, and mental stress.

5. Avoid Drugs and Alcohol
If you use drugs or alcohol, this can cause new problems. It can result in various negative consequences such as emotional fluctuations, impaired concentration, and disrupting body relaxation.

6. Practice Mental Health Independently
When you feel stressed, your mind is burdened, and your body is physically and mentally tired, several things you can do are deep breathing relaxation, divert attention by doing activities you like or hobbies, yoga, laughing, meditating, writing a diary, stretching, and drawing. sketching, listening to music, and dancing.

7. Self Reward
Students can show appreciation for themselves for the small achievements they have achieved. This reward can be in the form of praise and an expression of gratitude to yourself for the efforts you have made, or it can also be by giving yourself a gift, such as buying something you want. This is a way of recognizing one’s worth.

8. Utilizing Existing Resources
One other strategy for maintaining mental health is to take advantage of all the resources and facilities available on campus or in college. This includes utilizing counseling services or mental health consultants available on campus if any.

9. Contact a mental health professional
If students face mental health problems, they can schedule a meeting with professionals who are competent in the field of mental health, such as psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health specialist nurses, or other consultants. This step aims to get appropriate therapy to treat this problem.

10. Learn to say “NO!”
We have an understanding of the limits of our abilities. Taking responsibility beyond one’s abilities is not wise. It doesn't matter if we can't complete all activities, tasks, or meetings at the moment. We can arrange it to take place at a more convenient time in the future.

11. Improved Attitude
Stay calm because our mind is a very powerful tool. Use it to support, not burden us. Think rationally to avoid stress.

12. Manage Finances
Plan a budget for monthly expenses and use the money according to existing needs. Prioritize essential needs such as house rent, tuition fees, food needs, personal items, house operating costs petrol, and so on. Also, determine the amount of money that can be allocated for refreshing activities.

13. Support System
Support Systems can come from various parties such as parents, siblings, friends, partners, or counselors. Look for someone who makes you feel comfortable sharing your feelings. Sometimes, all we need is a chance to vent our frustrations.

4. Conclusion
Mental health is an important aspect of a person’s well-being because it includes emotional, psychological, and social balance that influences the way individuals think, feel, and behave daily. Previously, only individuals experiencing mental health problems were
considered to require mental health attention, whereas, for most people, this was considered to be of little importance. Mental health refers to an individual’s condition that facilitates progress in all dimensions of development, such as physical, intellectual, and emotional, towards their best potential in line with the development of others [23], [26].

Aspects of mental health also include efforts to manage stress, difficulties in adaptation, interactions with other people, and decision-making processes. This sometimes makes it difficult for students to control themselves and fully focus on their final assignment. In addition, increasing the amount of homework can have a bad impact on health, especially if homework is done simultaneously with other activities, thus disrupting students’ eating and sleeping patterns. The problems faced by students can cause frustration and depression because they believe they will not be able to complete their work on time.

Anxiety is also one of the mental problems faced by students when facing final assignments or papers at the end. Apart from anxiety, students also experience stress when completing their final assignments. The first step is for students to become more aware of their physical, mental, and emotional health. To avoid stress, we need to manage our time and focus on important things first. This activity supports the production of happy hormones in the body, thereby improving mood and reducing symptoms of anxiety, anger, depression, and mental stress. Another strategy to maintain our mental health is to take advantage of all the resources and facilities your university or college has to offer. If there are counseling services on campus, then students can take advantage of these facilities. However, a student who is struggling with mental health issues can schedule an appointment with a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health nurse, or other counselor.

References

Is it true that students’ mental health is a problem?


