MENTAL HEALTH PROFILE OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES AT WONOSOBO AL QUR'AN SCIENCE UNIVERSITY IN 2024

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Abstract

Background: Students, typically aged 18-30, are individuals enrolled in higher education institutions and are granted special status due to their academic role. However, student life often involves heavy academic workloads, tight deadlines, and the constant pressure to perform well. These factors can take a toll on students' mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and cognitive challenges. Objective: This study aimed to assess the mental health profile of prospective students at the Faculty of Health Sciences (FIKES), UNSIQ Wonosobo, in 2024. Methods: An analytic descriptive design was employed for this study, conducted at FIKES UNSIQ Wonosobo. The sample consisted of 160 prospective students from the regular class, selected using total sampling. Data was collected in September 2024 using a Self-Report Questionnaire that had been modified based on a literature review and validated for the study. Results: The study found that cognitive symptoms were most frequently reported by prospective students from the S1 Nursing program, with 24 respondents (70.5%) experiencing these symptoms. Many of these students had a vocational school (SMK) background (52.9%). Anxiety symptoms were also most prevalent among students from the S1 Nursing program, with 25 respondents (67.5%) affected. A majority of these students had a high school education background. These findings suggest a potential connection between educational background and the prevalence of mental health issues. This study underscores the mental health challenges faced by prospective students, emphasizing the need for support systems to help manage academic pressures and enhance student well-being.
Keywords: Mental Health, Prospective New Students, Cognitive Symptoms

INTRODUCTION

Students are individuals who are undergoing education in higher education (Language Center of the Ministry of National Education, 2018). In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, article 13 paragraphs 1 and 2, students are understood as members of the academic community who have an active awareness in developing their potential. They participate in the learning process, the search for scientific truth, and the mastery, development and application of science and technology. Thus,

their goal is to become cultured scientists, intellectuals, practitioners, and professionals (Indonesia, 2012).

In Pranajaya's research (2023), Bayu explained that students are often seen as individuals who have a lot of free time and avoid the heavy responsibilities of life. However, the reality is different; students are often faced with the demands of piling coursework, tight deadlines, and pressure to achieve good academic performance. All these burdens can have a significant impact on their mental health.

Mental-emotional problems are complex and multifaceted issues. They are closely related to an individual's ability to adjust to their environment and the stressors they face. When certain conditions hinder one's ability to adapt, mental-emotional problems may arise.

A study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) shows that approximately 104 out of every 1000 individuals between the ages of 14 to 25 experience various mental-emotional problems (Dhamayanti et al., 2018). Adolescents tend to be more vulnerable to stress due to various factors, including high pressure in the adjustment process, the desire for social acceptance, the drive for independence, and increased dependence on technology and other necessities. These factors can trigger emotional problems among adolescents (U. K. Aziz et al., 2021).

For students, although they feel physically ready, their psychological state is not necessarily in line. Mental unpreparedness in facing lectures can be a burden in itself that risks causing psychological problems, such as emotional disorders. In general, two types of mental emotional disorders that are often experienced by students are anxiety and stress (Kurniawan and Ngapiyem, 2020).

The results of research conducted by Kurniawan and Ngapiyem (2020) show that students, both those in the early and late semesters, have frequent problems that can cause them to experience stress and anxiety, which in turn has the potential to lead to depression. In this study, they examined 141 respondents who experienced anxiety, of which 94 respondents (67%) were identified as experiencing varying levels of anxiety. Of these, 25 respondents (18%) experienced mild anxiety, 48 respondents (34%) experienced moderate anxiety, 16 respondents (11%) experienced severe anxiety, and 5 respondents (4%) experienced very severe anxiety. In addition, 28 respondents (20%) also reported stress problems, with 19 respondents (13%) experiencing mild stress, 6 respondents (4%) experiencing moderate stress, and 3 respondents (2%) experiencing severe stress.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2017) states that anxiety is one of the most common mental disorders, with a very high prevalence. Worldwide, more than 200 million people, or about 3.6% of the total population, experience anxiety problems. In the United States, anxiety disorders are a common psychiatric condition, with the Anxiety Association of America reporting that approximately 40 million adults have this disorder. In that country, about 18% of the adult population over the age of 18 suffer from anxiety. Globally, an estimated 20% of the population experiences anxiety problems, and about 47.7% of adolescents experience anxiety frequently. In addition, national comorbidity studies show that out of every four people, one meets the minimum criteria for one of the anxiety disorders, with an annual prevalence rate of 17% (ADAA, 2014).

Based on research conducted by Mardiati et al. (2018), obtained interesting results regarding stress levels in second semester undergraduate nursing students at Stikes

Muhammadiyah Gombong. From the study, it was found that 57% of students did not experience stress, 19% experienced mild stress, 21% experienced moderate stress, and 3% experienced severe stress.

External factors that affect student stress levels in the learning adaptation process include several aspects, including: (1) Lecture assignments have no significant effect on students' stress levels. (2) However, the teaching methods used by lecturers have a significant impact on the stress level. (3) The teaching schedule also has a significant impact on students' stress levels. (4) In addition, the relationship with peers is the most crucial external factor in influencing students' stress level during the learning adaptation period.

A preliminary study conducted on 30 prospective students of FIKES UNSIQ Wonosobo in July 2024 found that 10% of prospective students were indicated or at risk of mental health problems.

The causes of stress and anxiety experienced by students during the learning process can be influenced by various factors in their academic life. External factors, such as accumulated coursework, heavy study loads, expectations from parents regarding academic success, as well as the need to socially adapt to the campus environment, contribute. In addition, the complexity of increasingly difficult course material is also one of the causes. On the other hand, the expectations shouldered by students may be closely related to their ability to follow the learning process well (Heiman and Kariv in Sutjiato et al., 2015).

The curriculum design continues to develop in line with the implementation of the concept of Merdeka Belajar and Kampus Merdeka (MBKM). MBKM is a form of learning that emphasizes student independence, and encourages the creation of an active and innovative learning culture, according to their needs. In this context, it is important to maintain a balance between social, intellectual, and personal aspects (Masithoh, et. al, 2021).

The MBKM curriculum, which adopts the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach, demands participatory and collaborative learning, through case-solving methods and project-based learning. The results of learning that involves participation and collaboration are also one of the main performance indicators of higher education, as stated in the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture Decree No. 3/M/2021.

Heavy learning loads and busy work schedules are the main factors that increase the incidence of depression, anxiety and stress among university students (Kulsoom and Afsar, 2015). In addition, pressures arising from educational demands, piles of assignments, exams, and scientific demands at the end of the study period, coupled with challenges in friendship relationships and family problems, are also common causes of depression among university students (Angraini, 2014).

According to Latipun (2019), mental health can be defined as an individual's ability to respond to their environment, which is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. These factors include biological, psychological, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects. The interaction between these four factors greatly affects mental health, as they are interrelated and dependent on each other, thus playing a crucial role in shaping a person's mental health. For example, internal factors include biological and psychological aspects, while external factors include environmental conditions and socio-cultural context.

Mental health refers to a state in which a person is free from mental disorders or illnesses. This allows individuals to interact well, both with themselves and with the surrounding

environment. Thus, mental health contributes to the creation of a meaningful and happy life, both in this world and in the hereafter (Mulyadi, 2017). The Self Reporting Questionnaire (SRQ) 20 is a medium used as an evaluation of a person's mental state or mental health disorder. The SRQ 20 consists of 20 questions and is designed with ease of use, requiring only a "yes" or "no" answer. In research, a person is considered to have a mental health problem if they answer "yes" to at least 6 questions (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2013). The SRQ 20 includes five indications, namely cognitive symptoms, anxiety symptoms, depressive symptoms, somatic symptoms, and decreased energy symptoms.

METHODOLOGY

This research method is descriptive analytic is a research method used to collect, organize, analyze, and describe data about the phenomenon under study. The main purpose of descriptive analytic research is to get a clear and accurate picture of the phenomenon being studied. Researchers will analyze the mental health profile of prospective FIKES UNSIQ students in Wonosobo. The samples taken by researchers were selected based on certain predetermined criteria. In this study, researchers used a total sampling technique, in which sampling was carried out on the entire existing population. namely 160 prospective new students of FIKES UNSIQ Wonosobo. With inclusion criteria: prospective students of regular programs, S1 Nursing Study Program, DIII Nursing and DIII Midwifery; exclusion criteria: prospective students of the employee program, prospective students of the nursing profession program, prospective students of the RPL pathway.

DISCUSSION

1. Cognitive Symptoms

Cognitive symptoms with manifestations of stress in the form of inability to think, lack of concentration, frequent daydreaming, and reduced productivity or learning achievement. Based on the results obtained by researchers, the cognitive symptoms experienced by prospective students are difficulty thinking clearly and difficulty making decisions. This is mostly experienced by prospective students from the S1 Nursing study program 24 (70.5%) and the type of vocational education18 (52.9%). This is in line with research conducted by Rahmadhani (2020) which revealed that there are various difficulties faced, not only related to skills in using technology, but also influenced by the amount of material that must be learned, given the large number of courses. This condition makes students experience stress which has a significant impact on reducing their cognitive test results, even up to 50%.

2. Symptoms of Anxiety

Based on the results of the research conducted, it was found that the most common symptoms of anxiety experienced by prospective students include difficulty sleeping, easy fear, tension, and anxiety or worry. The majority of this experience was seen in prospective students of the S1 Nursing study program with a percentage of 67.5% and in those with a high school educational background, namely 48.6%.

The causes of stress and anxiety in student learning dynamics often stem from academic aspects, generally from external demands and expectations they have of themselves. These external demands can include coursework, heavy learning loads, parental expectations of success in studies, and the need to socially adapt to the campus environment. In addition, the increasing complexity and difficulty of the course material also contributes to this. The expectations that students want are often related to their ability to follow the learning process well (Heiman and Kariv in Sutjiato et al., 2015).

The results of this study are in line with a study conducted at STIKES Kendal by Livana, Susanti, and Arisanti (2018), which showed that the level of student anxiety in preparing a thesis was in the severe category, with the majority percentage reaching 51.5%.

3. Symptoms of Depression

The results showed that the most depressive symptoms were experienced by prospective students of the S1 Nursing study program, with a total of 22 people (70.9%), followed by high school education graduates as many as 20 people (64.5%). The large prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among students is a serious concern mainly due to heavy study loads and busy work (Kulsoom and Afsar, 2015). In addition, factors such as pressure to succeed in education, piles of study assignments, exams, thesis assignments at the end of the semester, as well as social and family problems are also the biggest causes that contribute to depression among students (Angraini, 2014).

4. Somatic Symptoms

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, information is obtained that prospective students of the S1 Nursing study program experience somatic symptoms in the most significant number, reaching 22 people or 66.6%. Meanwhile, 11 people or 33.3% came from a vocational education background. These somatic symptoms can take the form of physical symptoms, which include both motor and sensory symptoms. Some of the symptoms that appear include abdominal pain, indigestion, muscle pain, blurred vision, red eyes, pale face, and a tired appearance (Fauziah, 2018).

The results of research conducted by Nikmah (2015) revealed a positive relationship between digestive disorders and stress conditions. This finding suggests that problems in the digestive tract are often caused by feelings of excessive stress, tension, anxiety or worry.

5. Symptoms of Decreased Energy

The results obtained showed that the symptoms of decreased energy were mostly experienced by prospective students from the S1 Nursing study program, with a percentage of 21 people or 67.7%. Among them, 11 people or 35.4% came from high school education. This finding is in line with the results of research conducted by Wuryaningsih in 2018, which revealed that female students often experience symptoms of fatigue as a result of decreased energy. The fatigue experienced by a person is closely related to the workload and the number of activities carried out. As revealed by Kurniawan and Kumolohadi (2015), a reduction in energy can result in a sense of fatigue and reduce an individual's ability to carry out daily activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of a study entitled Mental Health Profile of Prospective Students of FIKES UNSIQ Wonosobo, the following results were obtained :

1. Most prospective students of FIKES UNSIQ Wonosobo are not indicated to experience mental health problems 151 (94.37%) and prospective students who are indicated to experience mental health problems 9 (5.625%).
2. Symptoms of mental health problems most commonly experienced by prospective students among 160 respondents; experiencing symptoms of anxiety at 37 (24.37%), cognitive symptoms 34 (20.98%), somatic symptoms 33 (21.25%), depressive symptoms 31 (19.37%) and symptoms of decreased energy 31 (19.37%).

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