Students' Knowledge of Mental Health Literacy as a Prevention of Mental Health Problems

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ABSTRACT

This study identifies and analyzes students' understanding of mental health literacy for overcoming mental health problems that occur to them. A descriptive-qualitative method was used to systematically review the data. This study shows that the majority of students at UIN Pekalongan have an understanding of mental health and mental health literacy and how it affects them. However, there are still some students who have not fully implemented mental health literacy, which results in the absence of the influence of mental health literacy on them. Mental health literacy can affect a person's mental health if they truly understand and apply it in their daily lives, such as managing their stress. Stable mental health is when a person can deal with the pressures of normal life, work productively, and contribute to their community. Conversely, people who do not understand mental health will find it difficult to overcome mental health problems. There needs to be media assistance that can help students understand health literacy, one of which is social media. However, social media can also interfere with mental health, so information obtained must still be considered to avoid unwanted impacts. It is hoped that everyone can improve mental health literacy, one of which is students. Because mental health literacy is useful for oneself as well as others, each individual can learn how to respond to friends or family who experience mental problems in an appropriate way.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Health Literacy, University Students.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Duriana Wijaya et al., (2019), mental health occurs when mental functions correlate well, a person has the courage to face challenges, and positively feels happiness within himself. Mental health means not only avoiding mental illness but also having a good mental state (Keyes et al., 2002). Biological, psychological, social, economic, religiosity, and environmental factors interact to influence mental health. The factors that cause mental health problems are internal and external factors (Daradjat,

2001). Internal factors include personality, physical condition, development and maturity, psychological condition, attitude towards problems, and balance in thinking. External factors include social, economic, political, customary, and environmental conditions (Bukhori, 2006).

9.8% of Indonesians over the age of 15 have mental disorders, a significant increase of 6.0% from the previous year (Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesehatan RI, 2018). One of the causes of this increase is neglect of mental health. Similar to the statement presented by the World Health Organization (2022), mental health is one aspect that has continued to be neglected by society in the last decade.

People will deny the possibility of psychological disorders and feel that they are fine. As a result, they may be reluctant to seek psychological help (Hartini et al., 2018). Most people will not pay attention to mental health problems until they actually experience them (Lubis et al., 2015). Mental health detection is very important to get a picture of people's mental health (Livana & Arisdiani, 2019).

Mental health problems must be treated immediately, because if not, the condition will get worse (Ayuningtyas et al., 2018). The phenomenon of student suicide, which has increased recently, is considered a sad thing. More than 700,000 people die each year; according to the WHO, suicide is the fourth highest cause of death for those aged between 18 and 29 years, while students are included in the age group of 15 to 24 years Suryanto & Nada (2021). say that the late adolescence stage is at the age of students in general, namely 10 to 20 years, and early adulthood, namely 20 to 30 years. The late adolescence and early adulthood stages are periods of unstable mental conditions, accompanied by problems and demands, and changes in heart conditions. One of the causes of death in college students' average age is mental health (Baltag & Servili, 2016).

Suicidal events among college students can be prevented early on by managing stress. Someone who deeply understands mental health has a better way to manage their stress. Currently, a lot of literature is found such as online consultations and interactive webinars, discussing mental health conditions in the younger generation, including university students (Rozali et al., 2021). Additional solutions include teaching people how to care for their mental health and holding information-sharing sessions on mental health with the general public, especially those who are vulnerable to stress (Prasetyo, 2021). However, there are certainly challenges when creating and implementing such strategies. One of them is how to present the content and education in a cognitive way that ordinary people can apply (Ellyana et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, mental health literacy levels tend to be lacking (Novianty et al., 2019). Mental health literacy is defined as understanding and beliefs about mental disorders that can help people recognize, manage, and prevent psychological disorders (Jorm et al., 1997). However, mental health literacy is still lacking, and information about mental health should be widely disseminated both online and offline (Fuady et al., 2019). Poor health literacy can be harmful to oneself and others.

This phenomenon is related to the daily lives of students, which attracts the attention of researchers. Because there are many complaints about the world of lectures, this

problem must be researched further. This research aims to encourage and support students' mental health so that they can avoid suicide and self-harm. This research is expected to teach people, especially students, about the importance of mental health. Not only physical health is prioritized, but mental health is also important for life.

Based on the background description above, the researcher is interested in studying "Student Knowledge of Mental Health Literacy as Prevention of Mental Health Problems" Researchers hope that education and literacy about mental health will make people aware of the importance of mental health, encourage them to ask for help, reduce society's view of mental health sufferers, and tell them how to respond to friends or others who suffer from mental health.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using the descriptive-qualitative method. Data and information were collected through a literature review. Descriptive and exploratory analysis was used to explain student mental health issues objectively, systematically, analytically, and critically.

In order to find the necessary data and information, the author collected interrelated data to complete the data when the research was conducted. The author collected data using two types, including:

a. Primary Data

The primary data for this research comes from the results of interviews conducted directly with students. By conducting interviews with students, the author gets the main data for this research directly. The data collection tools used in this study will be used to analyze the research conclusions. Students of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan are the sample of this research.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data can be obtained from reports, documents, books, journals, or other sources related to this research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Mental Health Literacy

Mental health literacy means identifying disorders by knowing where to find mental health information as well as factors, causes, and risks. It also includes additional knowledge, such as self-help knowledge about existing mental health conditions, as well as appropriate actions to get the right help (O'Connor & Casey, 2015). Mental health literacy can also be described as knowledge and confidence about mental disorders that help in the identification, control, and prevention of mental disorders Jorm et al., (1997).

In the mid-1990s, the public was not targeted to be educated about mental health, and mental health was still considered something that only psychiatric practitioners needed to understand so that they could understand or identify disorders correctly. However, the term mental health literacy was introduced in 1997 by Jorm et al., (1997) to

assist in the process of recognizing, controlling, or preventing mental health disorders that can be learned by everyone.

A high level of mental health literacy will certainly increase people's awareness about mental health, which will help them spot mental disorders and manage them well. Conversely, people who do not understand mental health will find it difficult to overcome mental health problems (Anderson et al., 2013). Good mental health literacy will make people aware of the importance of mental health, how to get the right help, and treatment (Wei et al., 2015).

Research conducted by Rudianto (2022) found that generation Z is more aware of mental health because they know how urgent it is to maintain mental health in addition to physical health. However, negative views on society and external factors such as the number of health workers, anxiety about when the pandemic will end, and misconceptions about mental health itself all contribute to generation Z's mental health awareness. The similarity between these two studies lies in the method and type of research used, which is descriptive-qualitative. However, the difference between the two is that the subjects in the previous study were generation Z as a whole, while the subjects in this study focused more on university students in the age range of 19 to 24 years old.

Understanding of Mental Health

Interview results show that Pekalongan State Islamic University (UIN) students mostly understand the importance of mental health. Dita, a student at the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business, said that mental health is related to a sense of peace in one's life. She also said that with good mental health, one can perform their duties smoothly. Alda, a student at the Faculty of Ushuludin Adab and Da'wah, also said that mental health is when a person is able to overcome pressure in his life by realizing his potential. Thus, UIN Pekalongan students have a fairly good understanding of mental health. They may not really understand mental health, but they have heard about mental health.

The interview results are in line with Putri et al., (2015) research that mentally healthy people function normally in living their lives and can use their abilities to manage stress. According to mental health expert Merriam, mental health is defined as a person's good emotional and psychological state. This is considered good when a person can utilize their cognitive and emotional abilities to meet their daily needs (Zulkarnain, 2019). This is also in line with the theory of the World Health Organization (WHO), which states that stable mental health is when a person can deal with the pressures of normal life, can work productively, and can contribute to their community.

Someone who experiences mental problems usually has difficulty controlling their thoughts and themselves. According to Rudianto (2022), he tends to have difficulty thinking objectively and seeing things from a good point of view. It is very important for every individual to maintain their mental health so that they can live life, make decisions, do good, and even live well. Good mental health is also important in social life, especially for university students.

Knowledge of Mental Health Literacy Media

Zahra, a student at the Faculty of Economics and Islamic Business, said that she often uses Instagram as a source of mental health literacy. Many contents discuss the importance of mental health, especially for teenagers like her. Fitri, a student of the Faculty of Ushuludin, said that she often learns about mental health through Zoom webinars organized by the mental care community. The webinar discusses mental health issues and is very relevant to the major she studied in college.

Since there are many content creators who discuss mental health, UIN Pekalongan students usually learn about mental health from social media. Many media outlets share information about mental health. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and other websites are examples of social media that often spread information about mental health. It is also not uncommon for many mental health communities to help spread knowledge about mental health literacy or even open online counseling classes for people who need help with their mental health issues. In contrast, the National Institute of Mental Health reports that using social media can also increase the risk of mental disorders in people aged 18 to 25, including college students. According to Halodoc.com, research published in the journal JAMA Psychiatry showed that adolescents who spent more than three hours daily using social media were at higher risk of mental health problems.

Social media is a two-sided mental health literacy tool. While they can help increase knowledge about mental health, they can also be detrimental to one's mental health. In order for us not to experience poor mental health issues, we need to be smarter and more careful when choosing what we consume. Everyone should still consider what they are getting from the media by using accurate sources or by consulting experts in their field.

The Importance of Mental Health Literacy for College Students

Mental health literacy is a very important thing for UIN students in Pekalongan. Fatih, a source of a Shariah faculty student, said understanding mental health was important to him because it enabled him to control himself when faced with problems. If he doesn't know about mental health literacy, he might feel lost when he has a mental health problem. This answer differs from what the students of the Tadris faculty and the aristocrat Arini said. He says that no further understanding of mental health literacy is needed because he feels his mental health is fine and doesn't need much further understanding.

It's a pity that there are still students who don't pay attention to this. This is in line with the results of a study by Novianty et al., (2019), which found that mental health literacy in Indonesia compared to other countries is still low. Novianty et al., (2019). It is important to have mental health literacy because an understanding of and confidence in psychological disorders can help a person manage and prevent the occurrence of mental health disturbances (Jorm et al., 1997).

Mental health literacy should be an urgent matter to be understood by all, with no exception for students. Even if he feels healthy, there's no reason not to study the

importance of mental health. Because mental health isn't just about yourself; it's about how you respond to or help others.

The Effect of Health Literacy Skills on Sudent Mental Health

Mental health students are one of those influenced by health literacy. One of the sources from the Islamic Faculty of Economics and Business, Fina, said that learning about mental health and practicing it would be very helpful in dealing with mental health problems. However, he also says that sometimes a person only knows about mental health but less about practicing it, so it doesn't affect his mental health.

Basically, being aware of mental health means caring for ourselves, which helps us understand and control ourselves. Several aspects of health literacy (Muslic et al., 2021) include: 1) being able to identify psychological problems or different types of disorders; 2) knowing and believing about risk factors and their causes; 3) learning and understanding about self-help interventions; 4) knowing or believing in the availability of professional help for mental health problems; and 5) having a good understanding of how to find appropriate help. (Rachmayani & Kurniawati, 2016). Basically, mental health literacy will greatly affect a person's life, as it can help them solve a variety of problems related to their mental health. (Rudianto, 2022). When a person is in a disadvantageous state, such as fatigue, saturation, excessive anxiety, or depression, good mental health literacy can serve as an initial solution to the action to be taken to address the problem. Good mental health literacy will also help him understand the situation he is experiencing. He'll be more capable of managing his mental health and knowing how to take care of it. With that ability, he is able to identify his own condition, ranging from finding the cause to how to mitigate and solve the problem.

From the analysis that has been done, it can be concluded that so far, students at UIN Pekalongan already know a lot about mental health, and not even a few have felt themselves in their lives. They also acknowledge that mental health literacy becomes a positive thing by being a driver of mental health. But it will not be enough if mental health literacy is not balanced with skill or effort in applying its understanding to the needs of each individual.

CONCLUSION

Research results show that most UIN students already understand mental health and how it affects them. When one truly understands mental health and implements it in everyday life, mental health literacy can have a positive impact on their mental health. Because mental health literacy is useful to yourself and others as well, every individual can learn how to respond to friends or family who are experiencing mental disorders in the right way.

Students are advised to care more about their own mental health by understanding and applying mental health literacy in everyday life. Further researchers are expected to take even broader research objects to obtain more accurate results.

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