



Research Paper

The Influence of Self-Esteem and Hopelessness on Depression Levels in Early Adulthood Unemployment

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to examine the impact of self-esteem and hopelessness on depression levels. The research was conducted on 396 early adulthood unemployed individuals selected using incidental sampling technique. Data was collected using scales to measure self-esteem, hopelessness, and depression. The results of the study show that self-esteem and hopelessness simultaneously have a significant effect on depression levels. This suggests that having a positive assessment and feelings about one's self-worth, and not having negative expectations about oneself and the future, can help reduce depression levels. These findings provide insights into the importance of preventing depression, particularly among early adulthood unemployed individuals, by fostering a positive self-view.

KEYWORDS: Depression Levels, Self-Esteem, Hopelessness

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported a decrease in the unemployment rate in Indonesia, but there are still 7.99 million people who remain unemployed in the country [1]. Unemployed individuals have been found to be associated with physical problems (such as heart attacks and strokes), mental issues (such as depression and anxiety), marital difficulties, and murder [2]. Unemployment in early adulthood can lead to depression [3].

Based on a survey conducted by the Indonesian Association of Psychiatric Specialists (PDSKJI) regarding mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was found that 67% of respondents experienced symptoms of depression and had thoughts of suicide [4]. Another survey indicated that 58% of respondents, consisting of 3,533 people who filled out an online survey, reported being in a state of depression [5]. In addition, unemployment can increase the risk of suicide, as well as alcohol and substance abuse [6].

This study focuses on the phenomenon of depression among unemployed individuals in early adulthood. The research aims to identify several factors that impact the level of depression in early adulthood among those who are not working. Understanding the factors that can influence depression is expected to help in the prevention of depression.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As individuals enter adulthood, they begin to explore their identity, particularly regarding work and relationships. However, adults often experience instability in their education, employment, and romantic lives [2]. Unemployment, which is closely linked to economic, social, personal, and interpersonal aspects of an individual, makes them highly vulnerable to depression [7]. Depression can be defined as a specific mood change (sadness, loneliness, apathy), negative self-concept related to self-blame and self-criticism, regressive desires, and self-punishment (such as escaping, hiding, or wishing for death), vegetative changes (anorexia, insomnia, loss of libido), and changes in activity levels (retardation or agitation) [8].

Depression is caused by several factors, one of which is self-esteem. Research has found a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and depression, anxiety, and stress. This indicates that individuals with high self-esteem are less likely to experience depression, anxiety, or stress, and vice versa [9]. Self-esteem is defined as a specific type of attitude based on one's perception of their value as a person [10]. Another factor

closely related to depression is hopelessness. Hopelessness can be objectified by defining it as a cognitive schema system that generally reflects negative expectations about oneself and the future [11]. Research has found that individuals who struggle to cope with negative experiences may not immediately develop depression. However, individuals who lack resilience will experience hopelessness, which can lead to depression [12].

III. PURPOSE AND METHODS

This study was conducted with 396 unemployed individuals aged 18 to 40 years in Indonesia. The study subjects were selected using incidental sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using three Likert scale-based instruments. Depression levels were measured using the Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II), which consists of 21 items adapted by Ginting, Van der Veld, Naring, and Srisayekti [13]. Self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg's Esteem Scales (RES), which contains 8 items adapted by Alwi and Razak [14]. Hopelessness was assessed using the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS), which consists of 16 items, adapted by Hutajulu, Djuanaidi, and Triwahyuni [15].

The BDI-II instrument is in the form of a Likert scale with 21 favorable items, with a score range from 0 to 3. The reliability test of the BDI-II using Cronbach's Alpha analysis found a value of 0.90, and the test-retest correlation is significant ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$). Based on the discriminatory test, it was found that the items on the BDI-II have high discriminative power [13].

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the description of the early adulthood unemployment data are shown as follows:

Table 1. Demographic Data of Respondents

Sex	Total	Percentage
Female	336	84.85%
Male	60	15.15%
Total	396	100%

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of the research subjects are female, with a total of 336 individuals (84.85%), while male subjects account for 60 individuals (15.15%).

Table 2. Categorization of Depression

Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < 21$	Low	200	50.51%
$21 \leq X < 42$	Medium	165	41.67%
$42 \leq X$	High	31	7.83%
Total		396	100%

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the majority of the study subjects experienced low levels of depression, with 200 individuals (50.51%). Following that, 165 individuals (41.67%) were in the medium category, while the remaining 31 individuals (7.83%) were in the high category.

Table 3. Categorization of Self-Esteem

Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < 16$	Low	44	11.11%
$16 \leq X < 24$	Medium	188	47.47%
$24 \leq X$	High	164	41.41%
Total		396	100%

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that the majority of the study subjects had a moderate level of self-esteem, with 188 individuals (47.47%). Following that, 164 individuals (41.41%) had a high level of self-esteem, and the remaining 44 individuals (11.11%) had a low level of self-esteem.

Table 4. Categorization of Hopelessness

Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X \leq 44$	Low	185	46.72%
$45 \leq X \leq 70$	Medium	186	46.97%
$71 \leq X$	High	25	6.31%
Total		396	100%

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that the majority of the study subjects were distributed in the moderate hopelessness category, with 186 individuals (46.72%), followed by the low hopelessness category, with 185 individuals (46.97%). The remaining 25 individuals (6.31%) were distributed in the high hopelessness category.

Table 5. Cross-tabulation between self-esteem, hopelessness, and depression

Self-Esteem (X1)	Hopelessness (X2)		Depresi (Y)			Total
			Low	Medium	High	
Low	Low	Frequency	8	16	3	27
		%	2.02%	4.04	0.76	6.82%
	Medium	Frequency	7	10	0	17
		%	1.77%	2.53%	0%	4.29%
	High	Frequency	0	0	0	0
		%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Medium	Low	Frequency	34	28	5	67
		%	8.59%	7.07%	1.26%	16.92%
	Medium	Frequency	54	44	7	105
		%	13.64%	11.11%	1.77%	26.52%
	High	Frequency	9	2	5	16
		%	2.27%	0.51%	1.26%	4.04%
High	Low	Frequency	46	39	6	91
		%	11.62%	9.85%	1.52%	22.98%
	Medium	Frequency	39	20	5	64
		%	9.85%	5.05%	1.26%	16.16%
	High	Frequency	3	6	0	9
		%	0.76%	1.52%	0%	16.16%
Total		Frequency	200	165	31	396
		%	50.51%	41.67%	7.83%	100%

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that the majority of the research subjects, totaling 54 individuals (13.64%), have self-esteem in the moderate category, experience moderate hopelessness, and exhibit low levels of depression. Furthermore, it is noted that there are no subjects with low self-esteem who experience high levels of hopelessness or depression, whether at low, moderate, or high levels. Additionally, there are no subjects with high self-esteem who experience high levels of hopelessness and high levels of depression. The smallest group of subjects, consisting of 2 individuals (0.51%), have high self-esteem and experience moderate hopelessness and moderate depression.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Equation

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	30.853	6.226	.000
Self-Esteem	-1.157	-8.705	.000
Hopelessness	.363	7.012	.000

Based on Table 6, it can be seen that the constant value is 30.853, indicating that if the variables of self-esteem and hopelessness are both 0, the depression level would have a value of 30.853. The regression coefficient for the self-esteem variable is negative at -1.157, and the regression coefficient for the hopelessness variable is positive at .363. This means that for every one-unit increase in self-esteem, the depression level will decrease by 1.157. On the other hand, for every one-unit increase in hopelessness, the depression level will increase by .363.

V. CONCLUSION

In general, the unemployment of early adults in this study was found to have self-esteem and hopelessness in the moderate category, and to experience a low level of depression. Both self-esteem and hopelessness were found to simultaneously have a significant impact on the level of depression among early adult unemployed individuals. This explains that a decrease in self-esteem and an increase in hopelessness among the unemployed will lead to an increase in their level of depression during unemployment. Conversely, if self-esteem increases and hopelessness decreases, it will lower the depression level among the unemployed.

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