



The Role Of Emotion Regulation And Peer Social Support On Academic Stress Of Junior High School Students

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Diterima: 30-11-2023

Direvisi : 1-12-2023

Diterbitkan: 28-12-023

Abstract

Adolescents aged 13-15 years old experience a shift from childhood, one of it is a more independent academic life. In this time, adolescents are prone to experience academic stress. This study aimed to examine the role of emotion regulation and peer social support in junior high school students' academic stress. The participants of this study were 165 public junior high school student in the city of Yogyakarta who were chosen using non-random sampling method. The hypothesis of this study suggests that emotion regulation and peer social support play a role on academic stress in junior high school students. Instruments of this research are emotion regulation scale, peer social support scale, and academic stress scale. The data were analysed using multiple regression, which showed that emotion regulation and peer social support explained 20.9% of academic stress variance, with emotion regulation explaining 20.5% and peer social support explaining 0.4%. Therefore, future studies are needed to explore other factors that could play a role in junior high school students' academic stress.

Keywords: *emotion regulation, social support, academic stress*

Introduction

Junior high school is an education level situated between elementary school and senior high school, which attended by students categorized as early adolescence from psychodevelopmental perspectives, between 12 to 15 years old. *Template* untuk format artikel ini dibuat dalam MS Word 2007, dan selanjutnya disimpan dalam format rtf. File template format artikel ini dan dapat diunduh di www.ejournal.radenintan.ac.id. (Support Scientific Communities, 2017).

Hurlock (1980) defines adolescence as ever-changing periode of human development from physical, emotional, and psychosocial aspect. Those changes both on their physical selves and their environment puts certain amount of stress. Stress is a condition caused by interactions between self and environment, which emerges from discrepancies between demands from biological, psychological, and social aspect (Sarafino & Smith, 2012), born from lag between one self capacity and what they expected to do (Lazarus, 1976), which caused great deal of pressure to oneself

(Damayanti, 2013). Stress possesses dualistic nature combined between positive and negative aspect, and divided into several categories based on their contexts, including academic-based stress, labeled as academic stress.

Academic stress is caused by academic stressors (Desmita, 2009), originated from schools and educational institutes (Prabu, 2015) and related to studying materials and education themselves (Govarest & Gregoire, 2004). Academic stress is often caused by academic pressures, difficulties experienced during studies, and failures to fulfill one's academic expectation (Ang & Huan, 2006). Academic stress by itself is a major stress experienced by student in general.

This research is based on factual condition among junior high school in Yogyakarta. Preliminary study done by researcher, shows that academic stress among junior high school students comes from seven long-hour academic schedules at school, plus necessities of supplementary lessons after schools for supplementary purpose. Pressure from parents against their academic achievement also takes significant role, placing unnecessary stresses leading to psychosomatic responses and task-avoidance symptoms. They also experienced hardships in time management, resulting in doing take-home task earlier in the morning at school, caused by time deficiency. This finding is inline to research by Rainham (2004, from Desmita, 2009), which shows feeling of tiredness, emotional pressure, anxiety, confusion, and lack of personal time as result of academic stress. Stress affects biological and psychosocial aspects of human (Sarafino & Smith, 2012).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) formulated self (internal) and environment (external) as factors

of stress. One of the most known internal factor that affects stress is emotion regulation; an individual ability to alter emotion state to desirable condition (Gross, 1998). A good emotion regulation would result in a better emotional change, leading to a better equilibrium within self (Gross & Jazaieri, 2014), by utilizing emotion regulation strategy. This strategy requires one's both conscious and unconscious attempt to endure, strengthen, or reduce one or more aspects of emotions (Gross & Thompson, 2007), by modifying emotional experiences through adjusting negative or positive emotion's duration or level. Emotion regulation consisted of four aspects: strategy, goals, emotion or impulse control, and acceptance (Bardeen, Fergus, dan Orcutt, 2012; Gratz & Roemer, 2004). Emotion regulation is enacted through five methods, which are *situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, and response modulation* (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

Academic background is often filled with emotional experiences (Buric, Izabela, & Zvezdan, 2016), thus explains why emotion regulation among students often correlate with well-being, mental stability, cognitive function, and social skills (Gross & Thompson, 2014). A precise and adaptive emotion regulation would transform negative emotions into positive ones, which result in lower academic stress (Buric, Izabela, & Zvezdan, 2016), through rejection against negative sensations and though, dan emotional pressure (Wegner & Pennebaker, 1993; Siegling, Saklofske, Vesely, & Nordstokke, 2012). As a part of self-regulation and emotional intelligence, emotion regulation supports student capacity in learning (Oaten & Cheng, 2005).



The other external factors related to individual stress is environmental factor, represented by social support, providing protection against stress to student when facing academic hardship. Social support is defined as support given by significant others, leading to comfort (Baron & Byrne, 2004) and liberation from anxiety and fears (Smet, 2006). Social support is a kind of resources provided by others, in a form of information or other useful resources, which could lead to negative or positive effect toward health or well-being (Cohen, 2004).

Social support effectively reduces chances of experiencing stressful events (Lieberman, 1997; Kumolohadi, 2001; Lazarus dan Folkman, 1984). One of social support's form is peer support. Mappiare (1990) stated that peers are the first social macrosystem someone encounter outside of their family. Peer support also correlates negatively to student anxiety (Puspitasari, Abidin, dan Sawitri, 2010). Peer support is considered as one of the most important factor for adolescence beside emotion regulation against stress, as peer and friendships are important in their psychodevelopmental state. Sarafino and Smith (2012) defines five forms of social support: *emotional support, esteem support, instrumental support, informational support, and companionship support.*

One's effort to build a healthy social relationship and becoming a good part of society is known to be linked toward better health, especially mental health (Cohen, 2004), by detracting physical and psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression (Gottlieb, 1985). Social support helps oneself to combat negative influences of stressors (House, Kahn, McLeod, & Williams, 1985). Peer support is a part of social-cognitive factor and another important relationship with social environment (Smet, 1994). Social support

experienced by oneself could provide positive reinforcement toward better stress management, better self-esteem, and also better view toward both life itself and his own self. (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin, & Pierce, 1987).

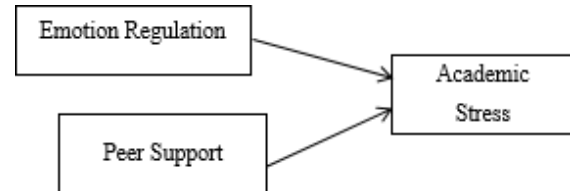


Figure 1: Research Blueprint

Researcher summarized from explanations above, that emotion regulation and peer support are known variable to contribute toward academic stress on junior high school students. This temporary conclusion would be tested in this research by including both emotion regulation and peer support as predictor variable, and academic stress as criterium variable. Hypothesis for this research is stated as: "emotion regulation and peer support contributes to academic stress on junior high school students".

Methods

This is a quantitative research using surveys as it's research method, with one criterium variable (academic stress) and two predictor variables (emotion regulation and peer support). Academic stress is measured using academic stress scale, compiled by Fathiyah (2019) based on academic stress aspects by Busari (2012) with validity score ranging from 0.600-0.900 and reliability. Emotion regulation is measured using emotion regulation scale by Fathiyah (2019) using emotion regulation construct from Bardeen, Fergus, and Orcutt (2012) with validity score ranging from 0.656-0.828 and reliability. Peer support is measured using social support scale by Rejeki (2016), based on social support construct by Sarafino

and Smith (2012) with validity score ranging from 0.550-0.925 and reliability. This survey is participated by 165 junior high school student. Hypotheses is tested using multiple regression analysis with enter method, which enters all predictor variable into the equations all at once. Significance level applied to this research is 5% or 0.05.

Result

Research data was collected from 165 junior high school students as participants, consisted of 70 male (41.8%), and 95 female (58.2%). Based on age, there are 34 (20.6%) student at 12 years old, 94 (57%) students at 13 years old, and 37 (22.4%) students at 14 years old. There are 49 (29.7%) 8th grader student and 116 (70.3%) 9th grader. The majority of academic stress level is at medium level (67.9%), emotion regulation at high (59.4%), and social support at high (52.7%).

Classical assumption test applied to this research shows these data to fulfill normality test, linearity test, and multicollinearity test. Data from this research is shown to have significancy score of 0.200 for normality test ($p > 0.05$), which concludes the absence of abnormality among academic stress, emotion regulation, and peer support's residual data. Linearity test shows deviation from linearity between academic stress and emotion regulation by 0.513 ($p > 0.05$), and between academic stress and peer support by 0.194 ($p > 0.05$), which shows linearity on both. Multicollinearity shows tolerance score by 0.959 ($p > 0.1$) and VIF by 1.042 (< 10). Correlation matrices showed significant

correlation between emotion regulation and academic stress ($p = 0.453$), unlike between peer support and academic stress ($p = 0.033$). F-score at 21.35 with significance at 0.001 ($p < 0,05$). This result shows that regression model between these three variables to be valid, thus accepting this research's hypothesis. Emotion regulation and peer support both predicts academic stress level by significant result.

Table 1: The Result of Individual Parameter Significance Test

Model	Unstabdarized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	96.443	8.553		11.277	.000
Emotion Regulation	-.847	.130	-.465	-6.517	.000
Peer Support	.047	.055	.061	.852	.396

Individual parameter significance test results shows that emotion regulation and peer support both emotion regulation and peer support contribute partially by each of themselves toward academic stress levels. Negative (-) B score or regression coefficient shows that predictor variable contributes negatively toward criterium variable, means that scores on predictor variables inversely correlated to scores on criterium variables. Emotion regulation predicts academic stress ($B = -0.85$, $\text{sig} = 0.000$, $p = 0.05$), in which peer support unable to predicts ($B = 0.047$, $\text{sig} = 0.396$, $p = 0.05$). Collective effective contribution is found to be 20.9% ($R^2 = 0.29$). This concludes that both predictors contributes 20.9% of academic stress levels, while other



79.1% was predicted by variables outside of this research.

Table 2: Individual Effective Contribution of Each Variables

<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square Change</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	.453 ^a	.205	.205	11.80487	.000
2	.457 ^b	.209	.004	11.81483	.396

Table 2, shows each predictor’s contribution toward criterium variable. Emotion regulation contributes 20.5% of academic stress levels, while peer support only contributes 0.4%. The latter’s contribution was considered insignificant, and thus to be neglected.

This research’s hypothesis is accepted, and multiple regression analysis shows that both variables predicts academic stress levels significantly ($p < 0.05$). Emotion regulation and peer support affects academic stress level negatively, which means that the higher each of emotion regulation and peer supports are, the lower academic stress level would be. Despite that, peer support failed to be tested partially, resulting in insignificant effect toward academic stress level of junior high student.

Emotion regulation and peer support, collectively contributes to academic stress level by 20.9%. On the other hand, partial analysis shows great discrepancies between both: emotion regulation predicts 20.5% of academic stress level, and peer support only predicts measly 0.4% of it. These findings greatly deviated from majority of researchs, which stated that peer support significantly affects academic stress. In this research, the general level of peer support is known to be high, but in contrast, rendered ineffective as predictor.

Emotion regulation greatly predicts academic stress level, as it prevents the destructive effect of stressful events (Kinner, Het, & Wolf, 2014). Stressful events generally accompanied by disturbing emotions, such as anxiety, anger, sadness, fear, guilt, and shame (Lazarus, 1991). Furthermore, Lazarus dan Folkman (1984) formulated that stress and emotions affected heavily on how oneself interpret and evaluate his relationship toward it’s environment. When oneself interacts with uncontrollable major factors of his life, it would lead to higher stress level. Conclusively, a good emotion management would have a significant role in deducting stress levels.

Lastly, this research shows how significant it is to have a good emotion regulation at adolescence, a period of development stormed by extreme and unpredictable emotions. These often results as emotionally explosive and confused adolescent, as stated by Hall (in Santrock, 2007), in which shows how important it is to possess a good emotion regulation. A good emotion regulation also results in a better decision making and managing negative drives. It is also resulting in a better fortitude against negative emotions and stressful events.

External factor supporting one’s ability to deal with stress is social support. Social support affects greatly on one person’s ability do fulfill his social function, and lowering social and emotional distress from stressors (Specht & Specht, 1986).

A major deciding factor of social support on adolescence is peer support, as they generally spend more time with peers than (Robinson from Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2007). Even so, this research shows negligible contribution of peer support toward academic stress level, and correlate poorly between each other.

This research reveals a special condition in which peer support may not be the deciding factor that affects significantly and consistently toward academic engagement and achievement. Berndt dan Keefe (1995, dalam Juvonen, Guadalupe, & Casey, 2012), also stated that intimacy plays a greater role in predicting student's behavior in school settings. Students experiencing supportive, intimate, close friendships, are often actively engaged in school activities. In contrast, conflicting and antagonizing friendship often lead to a more competitive-based relationship, which leads to more and more disruptive behavior in school. This explains that peer support's effect relies greatly on relationship quality; whether it is a supportive friendship or a more competitive one.

Other things to be considered is that students are tied to other significant academic figures which often have greater effect on their academic qualities: teachers, parents, course teachers, etc. Findings by Gutierrez, Tomas, Baricca (2017) from several junior high and senior high students shows that supports from teacher and parents contributes greatly to school engagement, in contrast to insignificant peer support. To certain adolescence, senior figures often yields greater effect because of a more mature and experienced viewpoint than their peer groups.

Conclusion

Based on the result, it is concluded that emotion regulation and peer support proved to contribute toward academic stress. Enhancing student's emotion regulation and the quality of peer support given by fellow students, would

lead to lower level of academic stress experienced by junior high school students.

Suggestion

It is advised for any researcher taking up this topic to include different predictor variable related to academic stress, for example: friendship quality or role model influence, as peer support was proven to have small and negligible contribution to academic stress. This result also shows that academic stress affects many aspects of academic performance, thus why professionals should prevent the escalation of academic stress by intervention based on emotion regulation and peer support.

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