



## Mental Health Conditions Among University Students

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Received : December 14, 2022

Revised : February 23, 2023

Accepted : February 28, 2023

Online : March 31, 2023

### Abstract

College students are one of the populations that are vulnerable to mental health disorders; various reasons can cause this. Sometimes there are triggers that cause students to feel that their mental health is not good, such as academic fatigue, academic stress, social support, and others. This study aims to find out how the mental health conditions at a university in Jakarta are described. The study involved 207 participants from 7 faculties using the Patient Health Questionnaire-9, Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7, and Deliberate Self Harm Inventory questionnaires. The analysis technique used was accidental sampling, and the data analysis technique used the Independent Sample T-test. The results showed that men have lower levels of anxiety and depression than women, while women tend to hurt themselves more than men. In conclusion, every faculty has students who experience anxiety disorders, depression, and self-harm behavior. As for this research, it can be used as additional data from previous research, especially at the University where this study was taken. The limitations of this research are in the aspects of the sampling method and the limitations of measuring instruments.

**Keywords:** *Anxiety, Depression, Self-Harm, College*

### INTRODUCTION

According to Xiong et al. (2020), the impact of Covid-19 on mental health experienced by the majority of the world's population includes anxiety disorders (50.9%), depression (48.3%), and stress (81.9%). In Indonesia, the impact of the pandemic on mental health varies. There are several complaints, including feeling worried and anxious, as well as having suicidal thoughts and depression (Angelina et al., 2021; Anindyajati et al., 2021; Pramukti et al., 2020). This problem is also exacerbated by conditions that require all activities to be carried out from home, including lectures that are conducted online. As a result, college students have started to feel bored and have anxiety about achieving study results, emotional disturbances, the difficulty of sleeping, and mood changes due to the many assignments they have to do (Akbar & Aisyawati, 2021; Irawan et al., 2020). Globally, female college students are more likely to experience psychological disorders than male students during the Covid-19 pandemic (Monte et al., 2022). Longitudinal studies in 2007 and 2014 of 30,574 participants in 13 provinces in Indonesia found that among 1,960 young adult participants, 27.86% of them experienced depression (Purborini et al., 2021). The result indicates that mental health problems have become common problems experienced by college students or individuals at the stage of early adult development (Wang et al., 2021).

Depression is a serious mental disorder that can lead to a negative impact on how an individual feels, thinks, and behaves. In some cases of depressive disorder, there is a comorbid disorder, namely anxiety. More than 45.7% of patients with depression are reported to have an anxiety disorder as a comorbidity (Kessler et al., 2015). Previous studies showed a significant correlation between depression, anxiety, and self-harm (FAVA et al., 2004; Lundh et al., 2011; Shao et al., 2020; Singhal et al., 2014). The results of other studies confirm that the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and self-harm in college students has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic

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(Hasking et al., 2021; Rosita, 2021). Otherwise, anxiety disorder is a mental disorder characterized by feelings of anxiety or excessive worry about a certain situation or event that is difficult to overcome or control (Rutter & Brown, 2017). In assessing anxiety disorders, there are categorizations in which we divide anxiety disorder into four levels: mild, moderate, severe, and acute anxiety (Spitzer et al., 2006). College students are a group at risk for mental disorders, including anxiety disorders, where the majority of college students experience anxiety at the severe and acute levels (Bhat U. et al., 2018; Chen & Lucock, 2022; Dachew et al., 2015; Dzulfikar, 2021; J. Lee et al., 2021). Another study on 195 college students indicated that 71% experienced anxiety due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Son et al., 2020). In general, college students are defined as a transitional period of educational level when an individual transitions from a high school student to a college student, which, from a psychosocial perspective, is in the age range of 17-25 years (Bowman, 2010; Santrock, 2018).

Anxiety disorders often coexist with depression and self-harm (Subica et al., 2016). By definition, self-harm is defined as behavior that intentionally destroys, injures, or harms oneself consciously without any suicidal intent. To assess the indication of self-harm behavior, there are 17 items with 'Yes' or 'No' answers to each question (K.L Gratz, 2001). College students are at risk for self-harm (Kim L. Gratz et al., 2002; Hamdan-Mansour et al., 2022). Other studies have shown that self-harm is a typical behavior performed by college students to vent their stress (Laye-Gindhu & Schonert-Reichl, 2005; Sivertsen et al., 2019).

Based on this explanation, anxiety disorders, depression, and self-harm behavior often appear in the college student population, particularly during the Covid-19 situation, as stated in previous studies' results. Therefore, it is crucial to research to understand anxiety disorders, depression, and self-harm behavior in the college student population.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Depression, according to Kroenke et al. (2001), is categorized into 4 degrees of depression: minimal depression, mild depression, moderate depression, and major depression. Thus, to determine the level of depression, Kurt Kroenke created an assessment instrument called PHQ-9, which consists of 9 short questions guided by the depression criteria in the DSM-IV. In assessing individual exposure to depression, there is an assessment instrument that is divided into five parts: Minimal Depression, Mild Depression, Moderate Depression, Moderately Severe Depression, and Severe Depression.

Meanwhile, anxiety disorders are categorized into 4 degrees: minimal anxiety, mild anxiety, severe anxiety, acute anxiety (Spitzer et al., 2006), and self-harm behavior; there are 17 aspects that are assessed in 17 questions (Gratz, 2001), and as follows skin cutting on hands, arms, or other parts of the body in the absence of suicidal intent, burning with a cigarette, burning with lighter or match, carving words into the skin, carving pictures into the skin, severe scratching, biting, rubbing sandpaper on the skin, dripping acid on the skin, using bleach or oven cleaner to scrub the skin, sticking pins, needles, staples, into the skin, rubbing glass into the skin, breaking bones, banging head, punching self, interference with wound healing, and other forms of self-harm.

As for the objectives of the research and the problems that have been attached to the introduction section, the researcher, therefore, proposed the hypothesis that students experience mental health disorders at one of the universities in Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a quantitative approach in which, in the entire research process, from composing proposals to drawing conclusions from the research results, it uses aspects of measurement and calculation, formulas, and numerical data. A non-experimental design was

implemented in this study because it did not involve manipulation and randomization. The variables involved in this study were measured and monitored for their contribution to each other in answering the proposed hypothesis. There are three measuring tools used in this study, as follows:

- Patient Health Questionnaire 9 was used to measure depression symptoms in individuals. There are 4 categories in this measuring instrument to assess depression symptoms (Kroenke et al., 2001): minimal depression, mild depression, major depression, and acute depression. This measuring tool consists of 9 questions with answer choices consisting of 'never', 'several days', 'more than half the days', and 'nearly every day'. Each answer has a different score. If the participant chooses 'never', the score is 0, 'several days' is 1, 'more than half the days' is 2, and 'nearly every day' is 3. An example of an item in this measuring instrument is "Feeling moody, gloomy, or hopeless".
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder Questionnaire 7 was used to measure symptoms of generalized depressive disorder in individuals. There are 4 categories in this measuring instrument to assess symptoms of a generalized anxiety disorder (Spitzer et al., 2006): minimal anxiety, mild anxiety, moderate anxiety, and severe anxiety. This measuring tool consists of 7 questions with answer choices consisting of 'never', 'several days', 'more than half the days', and 'nearly every day'. Each answer has a different score. If the participant chooses 'never', the score is 0, 'several days' is 1, 'more than half the days' is 2, and 'nearly every day' is 3. An example of an item in this measuring instrument is "Feeling restless, anxious, or very tense".
- The Deliberate Self-Harm Inventory was used to measure self-harm behavior without conscious suicidal intent. There are 17 forms of self-harm behavior in this measuring instrument (K.L Gratz, 2001). They are skin cutting, burning with cigarettes, burning with lighter or match, carving words into the skin, carving pictures into the skin, severe scratching, biting a part of the body, rubbing sandpaper on the skin, dripping acid on the skin, Using bleach or oven cleaner to scrub the skin, sticking pins or needles into the skin, rubbing glass into the skin, breaking bones, banging head, punching self, interference with wound healing, and other forms of self-harm. This measuring instrument consists of 17 kinds of self-harm behavior with answer choices of 'Yes' or 'No'. Participants who answer 'Yes' are assigned a score of 1, while those who answer 'No' are assigned a score of 0.

Based on the results of the validity and reliability test of the GAD 7 measuring instrument, we obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.867 and was declared valid and reliable in measuring the dimensions of anxiety (Angelin, Syenshine, & Ferlan, 2021). For the PHQ 9 measuring instrument, we obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.885, and it was declared valid (Dian, 2020). Furthermore, on the DSHI measuring instrument, we obtained the validity and reliability test results of 0.814, indicating that the DSHI measuring instrument is considered valid and reliable (Agustin, Faradiba, & Paramita, 2022). This research limits the scope of the variables examined in the discussion of anxiety, depression, and self-harm behavior.

Information related to this research was disseminated online to gather participants. Afterward, we collected participants in one WhatsApp group. We then explained the research in detail on the WhatsApp group and Zoom before participants filled out the questionnaire. The statement of consent was stated on the first page of the questionnaire. In this study, we implemented 2 types of data analysis: descriptive data analysis and inferential data analysis. Descriptive data analysis used to mean, median, and mode, while inferential data analysis used different tests to obtain data based on gender, faculty, and semester. Before conducting a difference

test, we conducted an assumption test as a condition for the difference test. We carried out the difference test using the statistical analysis technique independent sample t-test and the ANOVA difference test.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Before the participants filled out the questionnaire, all participants were given the statement of consent presented on the first page of the questionnaire. The participants provided their consent without any force from anyone. Subsequently, to protect the rights and privacy of the respondents, all forms of data acquired will remain confidential.

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Data were obtained from March-April 2022. The number of data entered was 290, but only 207 could be processed, as the rest of the participants were not students at the university we chose. To analyze the data, we used Jamovi 2.3.18 with an independent sample T-test method. Based on Table 1 shows that there are more female participants (79.7%) than male participants (20.3%). Most participants were from the Faculty of Pharmacy (33.8%), and most were fourth-semester students (47%).

**Table 1.** Participant Demographics

<b>Participant Data</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	42	20.3%
Female	165	79.7%
<b>Faculty</b>		
Faculty of Economy and Business	15	7.2%
Faculty of Law	26	12.6%
Faculty of Engineering	9	4.3%
Faculty of Communication Science	24	11.6%
Faculty of Pharmacy	70	33.8%
Faculty of Tourism	9	4.3%
Faculty of Psychology	54	26.1%
<b>Semester</b>		
Semester 1	4	1.9%
Semester 2	60	29%
Semester 3	5	2.4%

Semester 4	97	47%
Semester 5	-	-
Semester 6	33	16%
Semester 7	1	1%
Semester 8	7	3%

Based on Table 2, most of the students from one of Indonesia's universities we chose experienced a mild level of anxiety. Based on a gender perspective, the number of male students experiencing the lowest degree of anxiety is more than that of female students. This indicates that women are more anxious than men.

**Table 2.** Prevalence of Anxiety

<b>Anxiety</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Overall</b>		
Minimal	45	22%
Mild	75	36%
Moderate	48	23%
Severe	40	19%
<b>Male</b>		
Minimal	16	38%
Mild	17	40%
Moderate	6	14%
Severe	3	7%
<b>Female</b>		
Minimal	28	17%
Mild	58	35%
Moderate	42	25%
Severe	36	22%
<b>Faculty of Economy and Business</b>		
Minimal	3	20%

Mild	6	40%
Moderate	3	20%
Severe	3	20%
<b>Faculty of Law</b>		
Minimal	9	35%
Mild	10	38%
Moderate	6	23%
Severe	1	4%
<b>Faculty of Engineering</b>		
Minimal	2	22%
Mild	4	44%
Moderate	3	33%
Severe	-	0%
<b>Faculty of Communication Science</b>		
Minimal	7	29%
Mild	8	33%
Moderate	8	33%
Severe	1	4%
<b>Faculty of Pharmacy</b>		
Minimal	10	14%
Mild	21	30%
Moderate	17	24%
Severe	22	31%
<b>Faculty of Tourism</b>		
Minimal	2	22%
Mild	2	22%
Moderate	2	22%

Severe	2	22%
<b>Faculty of Psychology</b>		
Minimal	12	22%
Mild	24	44%
Moderate	9	17%
Severe	9	17%
<b>Semester</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
Minimal	1	25%
Mild	1	25%
Moderate	1	25%
Severe	1	25%
<b>Semester 2</b>		
Minimal	14	23%
Mild	13	22%
Moderate	16	27%
Severe	17	28%
<b>Semester 3</b>		
Minimal	0	0%
Mild	3	60%
Moderate	0	0%
Severe	2	40%
<b>Semester 4</b>		
Minimal	21	22%
Mild	44	45%
Moderate	18	19%
Severe	14	14%

<b>Semester 6</b>		
Minimal	7	21%
Mild	13	39%
Moderate	9	27%
Severe	4	12%
<b>Semester 7</b>		
Minimal	0	0%
Mild	0	0%
Moderate	1	100%
Severe	0	0%
<b>Semester 8</b>		
Minimal	2	29%
Mild	1	14%
Moderate	3	43%
Severe	1	14%

Table 3 also shows the percentage of depression experienced by male students, most of whom are in the mild category (low level) at 33%. The number of female students in the mild category is more than that of male students. For each faculty, the percentage of male students in the mild category is higher than that of female students in other depression categories.

**Table 3.** Prevalence of Depression

<b>Depression</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Overall</b>		
Minimal	36	17%
Mild	68	33%
Moderate	52	25%
Moderately Severe	36	17%
Severe	16	8%



<b>Male</b>		
Minimal	18	42%
Mild	10	24%
Moderate	7	17%
Moderately Severe	6	14%
Severe	1	2%
<b>Female</b>		
Minimal	18	11%
Mild	58	35%
Moderate	45	27%
Moderately Severe	30	18%
Severe	15	9%
<b>Faculty of Economy and Business</b>		
Minimal	2	13%
Mild	2	13%
Moderate	4	27%
Moderately Severe	0	0%
Severe	1	7%
<b>Faculty of Law</b>		
Minimal	6	23%
Mild	9	35%
Moderate	7	27%
Moderately Severe	4	15%
Severe	-	0%
<b>Faculty of Engineering</b>		
Minimal	2	22%
Mild	2	22%

Moderate	4	44%
Moderately Severe	0	0%
Severe	1	1%
<b>Faculty of Communication Science</b>		
Minimal	6	25%
Mild	8	33%
Moderate	4	17%
Moderately Severe	3	13%
Severe	3	13%
<b>Faculty of Pharmacy</b>		
Minimal	7	10%
Mild	20	29%
Moderate	20	29%
Moderately Severe	19	27%
Severe	4	6%
<b>Faculty of Tourism</b>		
Minimal	1	11%
Mild	3	33%
Moderate	2	22%
Moderately Severe	2	22%
Severe	1	11%
<b>Faculty of Psychology</b>		
Minimal	11	21%
Mild	19	35%
Moderate	13	24%
Moderately Severe	6	11%
Severe	5	9%

<b>Semester</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
Minimal	1	25%
Mild	1	25%
Moderate	0	0%
Moderately Severe	0	0%
Severe	2	50%
<b>Semester 2</b>		
Minimal	8	13%
Mild	18	30%
Moderate	10	17%
Moderately Severe	18	30%
Severe	6	10%
<b>Semester 3</b>		
Minimal	1	20%
Mild	1	20%
Moderate	2	40%
Moderately Severe	1	20%
Severe	0	0%
<b>Semester 4</b>		
Minimal	18	18%
Mild	34	35%
Moderate	26	27%
Moderately Severe	13	13%
Severe	6	6%
<b>Semester 6</b>		
Minimal	6	18%

Mild	12	36%
Moderate	12	36%
Moderately Severe	2	6%
Severe	1	3%
<b>Semester 7</b>		
Minimal	0	0%
Mild	1	100%
Moderate	0	0%
Moderately Severe	0	0%
Severe	0	0%
<b>Semester 8</b>		
Minimal	1	14%
Mild	2	29%
Moderate	1	14%
Moderately Severe	2	29%
Severe	1	14%

In addition, in Table 4, the data in this study also shows that the number of students who engage in self-harm behavior is 43%, and most are women. There are 33% of female students from the Faculty of Economy and Business, 35% from the Faculty of Law, 44% from the Faculty of Engineering, 46% from the Faculty of Communication Science, 47% from the Faculty of Pharmacy, 55% from the Faculty of Tourism, and 42% from the Faculty of Psychology who engage in self-harm behavior.

**Table 4.** Self Harm Behavior

<b>Self-Harm Behaviors</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
<b>Male</b>		
Not engage	32	76.19%
Engage in self-harm	10	24%
<b>Female</b>		

Not engage	85	52%
Engage in self-harm	80	49%
<b>Faculty of Economy and Business</b>		
Not engage	10	67%
Engage in self-harm	5	33%
<b>Faculty of Law</b>		
Not engage	17	65%
Engage in self-harm	9	35%
<b>Faculty of Engineering</b>		
Not engage	5	56%
Engage in self-harm	4	44%
<b>Faculty of Communication Science</b>		
Not engage	13	54%
Engage in self-harm	11	46%
<b>Faculty of Pharmacy</b>		
Not engage	37	53%
Engage in self-harm	33	47%
<b>Faculty of Tourism</b>		
Not engage	4	44%
Engage in self-harm	5	55%
<b>Faculty of Psychology</b>		
Not engage	31	57%
Engage in self-harm	23	42%
<b>Semester</b>		
<b>Semester 1</b>		
Not engage	1	25%
Engage in self-harm	3	75%

<b>Semester 2</b>		
Not engage	32	53%
Engage in self-harm	28	47%
<b>Semester 3</b>		
Not engage	2	40%
Engage in self-harm	3	60%
<b>Semester 4</b>		
Not engage	57	59%
Engage in self-harm	40	41%
<b>Semester 6</b>		
Not engage	21	64%
Engage in self-harm	12	36%
<b>Semester 7</b>		
Not engage	1	100%

Referring to Table 5, based on the average score of the three variables studied, the score of depression has the highest average value of 10.35 and the highest standard deviation value of 6.00.

**Table 5. Descriptive Test**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Anxiety	9.06	5.10
Depression	10.35	6.00
Self-Harm	1.43	2.16

Based on the results of the descriptive difference test on the variables of anxiety, depression, and self-harm, the results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Group Descriptive Test**

	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SE</b>
<b>Anxiety</b>	Male	42	6.571	5.50	4.36	0.672
	Female	165	9.70	9.00	5.10	0.397
<b>Depression</b>	Male	42	7.476	5.50	5.58	0.861

	Female	165	11.09	10.00	5.90	0.460
<b>Self-Harm</b>	Male	42	0.738	0.00	1.55	0.239
	Female	165	1.61	0.00	2.26	0.176

**Table 7.** Independent Sample T Test

		<b>Statistic</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>Mean difference</b>	<b>SE difference</b>
Anxiety	Student's t	-3.65	205	<.001	-3.132	0.858
Depression	Student's t	-3.58	205	<.001	-3.615	1.009
Self-harm	Student's t	-2.36 <sup>a</sup>	205	0.019	-0.874	0.370

The analysis results of the independent sample T-test in Table 4 show that there are differences in the level of anxiety in men and women ( $t [205] = -3.625$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Men ( $M = 6.571$ ;  $SD = 4.36$ ) have lower anxiety levels than women ( $M = 9$ ;  $SD = 5.10$ ). Furthermore, in the aspect of depression, it is found that there are also differences in depression levels between men and women ( $t [205] = -3.581$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Men ( $M = 7.47$ ;  $SD = 5.58$ ) have lower levels of depression than women ( $M = 11.09$ ;  $SD = 5.90$ ). Meanwhile, in the aspect of self-harm, it is found that women have a higher tendency for self-harm behavior than men ( $t [205] = -2.363$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Women are more prone to self-harm ( $M = 1.61$ ;  $SD = 2.26$ ) than men ( $M = 0.738$ ;  $SD = 1.55$ ).

The results of this study support previous research that has been done that female students tend to have higher levels of anxiety than male students (Gao et al., 2020; Graves et al., 2021). In terms of depression, it is known that the results of previous studies show that college students tend to have higher levels of depression than male students (Lee & Jeong, 2021). Meanwhile, regarding the tendency to engage in self-harm behavior, previous studies have also found that more self-harm behaviors are carried out by women than men (Li et al., 2020; Victor et al., 2018).

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicate that anxiety, depression, and self-harm behavior exist among students from one of Indonesia's Universities that we choose. The female students experience more depression and anxiety and engage more in self-harm behaviors than the male students. The data in this study also shows that each faculty has students who experience depression and anxiety at degrees that are no longer minimal but at mild, moderate, and severe levels. They also engage in self-harm behaviors.

In terms of methodology, our suggestion for further research is to use the quota sampling technique and random sampling technique to minimize the chance of bias. Furthermore, the measuring tools applied in this study are limited to PHQ and GAD, while there are several other measuring tools that can be used. In terms of the research approach, a quantitative approach is suggested as an alternative to obtaining more detailed and comprehensive information on the mental health state of college students during the Covid-19 situation.

## LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The purpose of this study is to find out the state of mental health consisting of anxiety,

depression, and self-harm behavior of college students from one of Indonesia's Universities that we choose. The data in this study indicate that college students spread across 7 faculties at one of Indonesia's Universities that we choose experience anxiety, depression, and engage in self-harm behaviors. This result further strengthens the poor mental health condition of college students in the ongoing Covid-19 situation when data collection was carried out. This result is also in line with previous research, which found that anxiety and depression are situations experienced by a substantial amount of college students (Akbar & Aisyawati, 2021; Irawan et al., 2020; Xiong et al., 2020). In the Covid-19 situation, college students needed to undergo a number of adaptations, particularly with regard to the learning process. The learning process that was previously face-to-face has become online, and the service system on campus has also become limited. On the other hand, the burden of assignments and examinations on students must continue to be carried out in a different way. College students who usually meet and interact or study in groups can no longer meet their peers during the Covid-19 situation.

Furthermore, this study found that female college students had a higher percentage of experiencing anxiety and depression. This is in line with the results of previous studies that women are more prone to anxiety and depression (Monte et al., 2022). There are differences in biological factors, such as hormonal differences and the chance of experiencing unstable conditions (such as pregnancy and menstruation, which can affect the condition of women), between men and women. In addition, the response to stress may become the reason for this difference as well. Women are more likely to manage their stress by reducing the emotions they feel or also known as doing emotion-focused coping. Women are more likely to think about causal relationships from events that arise and overthink the situations they experience. Their focus is more on reducing the symptoms of anxiety experienced, not on solving the problems. The data in this study also shows that women engage more in self-harm behaviors. This is in line with previous research, which states that self-harm behaviors are found more in women (Asher & Aderka, 2018; Chang et al., 2021; Cunningham et al., 2022; Fernandes et al., 2018).

The results in this study strengthen the previous research, particularly those whose population is from the University that we choose. However, the number of participants in this research does not enough represent the population of students enrolled in one of Indonesia's Universities that we chose; hence, the external validity of this study is considered weak. The response of college students to questionnaires with the theme of mental health is still considered insufficient, and it has become a challenge for the following mental health research to encourage more college students to be involved. It is better to use a quota sampling technique to obtain a proportion of college students from each faculty that equals the total number of students in that faculty. Therefore, the results in this study only represent the data of participants who are willing to be involved in this study.

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