



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY AND THE LEVEL OF DEPRESSION AMONG STUDENTS IN INDONESIA: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Hubungan antara Keaktifan Organisasi dengan Tingkat Depresi pada Mahasiswa di Indonesia: Studi Cross-Sectional

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ABSTRACT

Background: Students are free and want to innovate, but often experience stress and psychological problems due to academic and organizational responsibilities. According to the latest data, around 10.7% of Indonesia's population aged 15 years and over experience depression, and a survey of university students showed that 76% experience psychological pressure. **Purpose:** This study explored the relationship between the level of organizational activity and depression in sixth-semester public health students at the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Natural Sciences (FIKKIA) Universitas Airlangga. **Methods:** This research used quantitative methods and the CES-D instrument. The research design is a chi-square test with STATA software. **Results:** The results of the analysis showed that 45.83% of public health students who did not join organizations had moderate depression and 16.67% had very severe depression. Meanwhile, 40% of those who participated in the organization had moderate depression and 10% had very severe depression. **Conclusion:** Research shows there is no relationship between organizational activity and depression levels, with a value of ($p=0.382 > 0.05$). A recommendation to improve student well-being is to provide easily accessible counseling services so that students can understand and overcome their depression.

Keywords: students, organizational activeness, depression

ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Mahasiswa merupakan individu yang bebas dan berkeinginan untuk berinovasi, namun sering kali mengalami stres dan masalah psikologis akibat tanggung jawab akademis dan organisasi. Menurut data terkini, sekitar 10,7% populasi Indonesia berusia 15 tahun ke atas mengalami depresi, dan survei terhadap mahasiswa menunjukkan bahwa 76% mengalami tekanan psikologis. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan antara tingkat keaktifan organisasi dengan tingkat depresi mahasiswa kesehatan masyarakat semester VI di Fakultas Ilmu Kesehatan, Kedokteran dan Ilmu Alam (FIKKIA) Universitas Airlangga. **Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif, dengan menggunakan instrumen CES-D. Desain penelitian berupa uji chi square dengan software STATA. **Hasil:** Hasil analisis menunjukkan mahasiswa kesehatan masyarakat yang tidak mengikuti organisasi, 45,83% memiliki depresi sedang dan 16,67% depresi sangat parah. Sementara yang mengikuti organisasi, 40% depresi sedang dan 10% depresi sangat parah. **Kesimpulan:** Penelitian menunjukkan tidak ada hubungan antara keaktifan organisasi dan tingkat depresi, dengan nilai ($p=0,382 > 0,05$). Rekomendasi untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan mahasiswa adalah menyediakan layanan konseling yang mudah diakses, agar mahasiswa dapat memahami dan mengatasi depresi mereka.

Kata kunci: mahasiswa, keaktifan organisasi, depresi

INTRODUCTION

Students are free individuals who do not want to be bound by things that can make it difficult for them to create and change things. Students always want to move towards change and renewal with a more positive mind, critical thinking, responsible attitude, and mature nature. Generally, students are between 18 and 24 years old, which is a transition period between adolescence and adulthood. As a result, students at this age are still very unstable in solving problems. Problems that eventually lead to stress are common when fulfilling these responsibilities (Ningrum & Murdiyanto, 2023).

Based on the Basic Health Research in 2023, it informed that for the age of 15 years and above, 10.7% of the total population in Indonesia is experiencing depression (Ministry of Health, 2023). The Spring 2023 national survey conducted by the American College Health Association (ACHA) of more than 55,000 undergraduate students revealed that approximately 76% experienced moderate to serious psychological distress. From data from POLRI's National Criminal Information Center (PUSIKNAS), there were 971 suicides in Indonesia between January and October 18, 2023, exceeding the total of 900 cases in 2022

Students who actively participate in organizations are considered to have greater potential for stress. This is due to the division of responsibilities between student roles and organizations that run at the same time. Two roles at once with inherent responsibilities can lead to an inability to divide time, poor performance in responsibilities, imbalance in one of the roles, the emergence of anxiety and depression.

Student organizations are a place to develop the interests of existing talents and

potential of students outside of college activities. This student organization is important for student self-development because it teaches them to be able to have an opinion, dare to make personal decisions, also be responsible and as a place to develop potential both in academics and organizations (Ningrum & Murdiyanto, 2023).

Depression is an example of a mental disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, which can negatively affect one's physical and social well-being. It is a serious illness that involves persistent and worsening mood as its main symptom. Depression can be triggered by prolonged exposure to stress related to recent events. People experiencing depression often lose interest, experience weight changes, sleep disturbances, lack of energy, and have thoughts of death or suicide (Malhi & Mann, 2018).

The SDGs have five main cornerstones of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, aiming to achieve three noble goals by 2030. This research helped identify health problems experienced by the community. In accordance with the SDGs Global goal number 3 focuses on good health and well-being of all people at all ages.

Although there have been several studies on depression among university students, studies that specifically examined the relationship between organizational involvement and depression levels are still rare in Indonesia. Some studies showed that involvement in organizations can reduce depression levels, while other studies showed opposite results or found no significant relationship (Rahmadani & Yanuvianti, 2019).

Therefore, the author conducted a study on the level of depression of public health students in semester VI of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Medicine and Natural Sciences, Universitas Airlangga. The purpose

of this study was to identify the relationship between organizational activeness and the level of depression in public health students in semester VI of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Medicine and Natural Sciences, Universitas Airlangga.

METHOD

Study Design

This study was conducted from June 5 to June 17, 2024. This study used a cross-sectional design. quantitative method, using the CES-D instrument.

Population and Sample

The population in the study were 6th semester students of public health study program, Faculty of Health Sciences, Medicine and Natural Sciences (FIKKIA), Universitas Airlangga as many as 44 people (36 women, 8 men). Data collection was collected by distributing questionnaire links using google form to respondents who met the criteria. The total sampling method was used in determining the sample. Samples were taken according to the criteria, namely VI semester students of public health study programs who did not participate in the organization and students who participated in both external and internal organizations.

Data Collection

The distribution of questionnaires to respondents was conducted for primary data collection. The instrument used was the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale by Radolf in 1972. This measurement was used to identify depression in the general population. The CES-D instrument consisted of 20 statements regarding depressive symptoms experienced during the previous week. Each statement was assessed using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from Never (TP), Sometimes (K), Often (S), Always (SL) with a score measurement of 0-9 (Normal), 10-13 (Mild), 14-20 (Moderate), 21-27 (Severe), 28-max (Very Severe). Measurement of organizational activity was measured by adding questions to the questionnaire related to joining an organization or not at this time.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the chi square test with STATA software.

RESULTS

The results of the data collection analysis showed that the number of students who were currently not active in organizations was 24 students or 54.55%. However, those who were active in organizations were 20 students or 45.45%.

Table 1. Distribution based on Organizational Activity of 6th Semester Public Health FIKKIA UNAIR Students

Organization	Freq	Percent	Cum
No	24	54.55	54.55
Yes	20	45.45	100.00
Total	44	100.00	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The results were obtained based on the level of depression in sixth semester public health students of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Natural Sciences (FIKKIA) Universitas Airlangga. It showed that moderate depression was experienced by

most respondents with a total of 19 students (43.18%). Meanwhile, mild depression in sixth semester students has the fewest respondents with a total of 5 students (11.36%).

Table 2. Distribution based on Depression Levels of Sixth Semester Public Health Students of FIKKIA UNAIR

Depression Level	Freq	Percent	Cum
Normal	8	18.18	18.18
Mild	5	11.36	29.55
Moderate	19	43.18	72.73
Severe	6	13.64	86.36
Very Severe	6	13.64	100.00
Total	44	100.00	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

The results of the bivariate analysis showed that those who did not join the organization had 20.83% experiencing normal levels of depression, 12.5% experiencing mild levels of depression, 45.83% experiencing moderate levels of depression, 4.17% experiencing severe levels of depression, and 16.67% experiencing very severe levels of depression.

The results of the bivariate analysis of those who joined the organization showed that 15% experienced normal levels of depression, 10% experienced mild levels of depression, 40% experienced moderate levels

of depression, 25% experienced severe levels of depression, 10% experienced very severe levels of depression.

The relationship between organizational activity and depression levels produced a value of $\rho = 0.382$, which was greater than 0.05. This showed that there was no statistically significant relationship between organizational activity and depression levels among sixth semester public health students of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Natural Sciences, Universitas Airlangga.

Table 3. Relationship between Organizational Activity and Depression Level of Public Health Students in Semester VI FIKKIA UNAIR

Organization	Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Very Severe	Total
No	5	3	11	1	4	24
Yes	3	2	8	5	2	20
Total	8	5	19	6	6	44
Pearson chi2 (4) = 4.1779					Pr = 0.382	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the respondents' analysis obtained from sixth semester students of the Public Health Study Program at Universitas Airlangga, there were 24 students (54.55%) who were inactive in organization. Some students experienced moderate depression. Data on the distribution of depression based on organizational

activity showed that there was no relationship between organizational activity and depression levels.

According to Gupta & Verma (2019), students who are active in organizations have a wider social network, which provides emotional and practical support when facing various academic challenges. This support helps reduce stress levels. Involvement in

organizations can also increase students' self-confidence through leadership experiences and achieving common goals. It has a positive impact on reducing stress related to academic performance. Tran & Nguyen (2020) stated that participation in organizations helps students hone their time management skills, allowing them to balance academic responsibilities and organizational activities more effectively.

This study was in line with the research of Muktar *et al.* (2025). They revealed that students who are active in organizations tend to experience lower stress because they have more experience in solving problems. Involvement in organizations provides students with various experiences and strategies to deal with the challenges they face.

Research conducted by Yelvita (2022) in the journal by Muktar *et al.* (2025), also stated that students who are active in organizations tend to have lower stress because organizations are a place for students to relieve stress due to lectures.

Research conducted by Nia Handayani *et al.* (2023) stated the opposite. They stated that there is a relationship between students who participate in organizations and anxiety levels, where the more active students are in organizations, the more severe the anxiety levels. This difference occurs because of the different types of research and respondents where this researcher took respondents from three classes, namely students from the 2019, 2020, and 2021 classes.

The research conducted has several weaknesses, such as the researcher cannot verify the accuracy of the self-reported responses. In addition, this study only focuses on the sixth semester students of the public health study program. Hence, it limits the generalization of the results. The advantages

of this study are that this study contributes to the limited literature on the relationship between organizational activity and depression levels in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The conclusion of this study shows that there is no relationship between organizational activity and depression levels among sixth semester public health students. This finding is based on the results of the Chi Square Test Analysis with a value of $\rho = 0.382$. Since the ρ value obtained is greater than 0.05, this indicates that there is no relationship between the two variables among sixth semester public health students of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Natural Sciences, Universitas Airlangga.

^ In order to improve student welfare, the campus is advised to provide counseling services that are easily accessible and known to students. This is important so that they can understand the causes of depression they experience and seek help if needed. Thus, the level of depression among students can decrease, regardless of their participation in the organization.

Future researchers are needed to expand theoretical studies, refine measurement instruments, and increase the number of populations and samples in research in order to provide a more comprehensive analysis, and produce broader and more generalizable data.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Yuniar Laksmi Eka Wardani as data collection, data analysis, manuscript writing, literature review, references. Irma Hanifatu Sa'adah as data collection, data analysis. Jayanti Dian Eka Sari, S.KM., M.Kes. as data supervision, data analysis, manuscript revision.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The researcher has no conflict of interest in compiling this journal.

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