

Mental Health in Cases of Teenage Suicide

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Abstract: This study examines the phenomenon of suicide among university students and adolescents from diverse backgrounds, emphasizing the relationship between mental health conditions and suicidal behavior. The research aims to identify key psychological, social, and emotional factors contributing to suicidal tendencies in youth. Using a qualitative approach supported by case study analysis, the data were obtained through documentation review and interviews with mental health professionals. The findings reveal that most victims exhibited symptoms of mental health disorders, including inner conflict, communication difficulties, and self-harm ideation, which significantly impaired their social functioning and emotional stability. Furthermore, these conditions often manifested in mood fluctuations and deteriorating physical well-being. The study concludes that early detection of mental health disorders and the provision of continuous social and emotional support are essential strategies to prevent adolescent suicide. These findings highlight the need for collaborative interventions between educational institutions, families, and healthcare providers to promote mental well-being and resilience among adolescents.

Keyword : Mental Health, Teens, Suicide

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Introduction

Adolescence constitutes one of the most critical developmental stages in the human life cycle, representing a transitional period between childhood and adulthood that encompasses physical, psychological, emotional, and social maturation. According to Siti Sundari, adolescence is characterized by multidimensional development that prepares individuals for adult roles and responsibilities. These transformations often involve complex emotional regulation, identity exploration, and adaptation to new social expectations. As noted by Aulia et al. (2019), the intensity of biological and psychosocial changes during this phase requires adolescents to develop effective coping mechanisms to maintain mental and emotional balance. Failure to adapt to these developmental transitions may result in psychological distress, decision-making difficulties, and maladaptive behaviors that hinder personal growth. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for identifying risk factors that contribute to mental health problems among adolescents and for designing effective preventive measures. From a broader perspective, this study underscores the importance of promoting resilience and adaptive skills during adolescence as part of comprehensive public health and educational interventions aimed at reducing the incidence of psychological disorders and suicide among youth populations.

Mental health is the ability of an individual to adapt and interact positively with their environment, if an individual is less able to adapt, it will cause the individual to be

depressed and experience mental disorders (WHO, 2022). For example, some students consider higher education to be a difficult time to go through. Meeting the demands of dense lectures, being far from parents, and a very different life transition period during school can have an impact on students' mental health. Based on research listed in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*, entitled "The correlation between mental disorders and suicide regarding "The relationship between mental health disorders and suicide: A systematic review and meta-analysis of record linkage studies," it was revealed that individuals with mental health disorders have an eight-fold higher risk of suicide than those without mental health disorders (Guru, n.d.).

We often encounter cases of death caused by suicide and the cases are always increasing from time to time. Teenage suicide involves complex factors such as mental health problems, family conflict, social isolation, academic stress, use of harmful substances, the influence of social media, lack of social support, etc. Suicide is a conscious self-destructive behavior carried out by someone who considers suicide as the best solution to the problems they face (Ratih & Tobing, 2020). Doctor R. Vensya Sitohang, M.Epid, who serves as Director of Mental Health at the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, stated that the number of suicide cases in 2022 had reached 826 cases, an increase of 6.37 percent from 772 cases in 2018 (Sagita, 2023). According to WHO, globally, suicide is the second highest cause of death in adolescents aged 15-29 years. These cases will continue to increase if they do not receive serious attention from various parties (Ratih & Tobing, 2020).

Research on mental health in adolescent suicide cases is increasingly critical given the persistent global rise in suicide rates among young people. According to the World Health Organization (2023), suicide ranks among the top five causes of death in adolescents aged 15–19, underscoring the urgency of addressing underlying psychological and social determinants. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to a more comprehensive understanding of how mental health disorders—such as depression, anxiety, and emotional dysregulation—interact with suicidal behavior in adolescents. By identifying these risk factors, the research provides valuable insights for the development of targeted prevention strategies, including universal interventions like school-based mental health programs and selective interventions for high-risk individuals. Moreover, the findings have implications for shaping public health policies and clinical practices aimed at early detection, timely intervention, and continuous psychosocial support. Ultimately, this study seeks to strengthen the evidence base for integrative approaches to adolescent mental health, thereby contributing to a more effective and sustainable reduction in suicide risk.. The results of this study not only provide a basis for understanding the serious impact of mental health on adolescents, but also urge the need for serious attention and immediate preventive measures from various parties, including health institutions, education, and society as a whole regarding mental health.

Many studies have been conducted by researchers on adolescent suicide, including by Agustinus Fasak and Augustina Sulastri with the research title "Why are more and more Indonesian adolescents committing suicide? A literature review". This study used a systematic review method conducted through the Researchgate, Google Scholar, and PubMed databases. The results of the study stated that risk factors for suicide in adolescents in Indonesia involve negative self-concept, poor communication with family, depression, and economic pressure. In addition, the study also showed that prevention methods such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) can be used to measure adolescent health risk behaviors and improve mental

health literacy. Other findings showed that dysfunctional communication patterns in the family and environmental pressures, such as economic pressure and pressure from the school environment, also contribute to the risk of suicide in adolescents. A psychoanalytic approach can also help prevent suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts in adolescents (Fasak & Sulastri, 2022).

This study is clearly different from the study conducted by Azmul Fuady Idham, M. Arief Sumantri, and Puji Rahayu entitled "Suicide Ideation and Attempts in Students". This study uses a quantitative method, using numbers as a benchmark. The findings of the study showed that 36 students (58.1%) out of a total of 62 participants had a high tendency towards suicidal ideation and attempts. The results of the regression test showed that age was proven to have an influence on suicidal ideation and attempts in students ($p = 0.018$; $R^2 = .018$). This study shows that most students have high levels of suicidal ideation and attempts, and age is proven to influence this tendency. This means that the older a person is, the higher the likelihood of having suicidal ideation and attempts. Age factors can influence suicidal behavior in students (Idham et al., 2019).

In terms of mental health, it has been studied by Faqih Purnomosidi, Sri Ernawati, Dhian Riskiana, and Anisa Indriyani in the Community Service Journal with the title "Mental Health in Adolescents". The results of the service show that most adolescents, especially students, have difficulty in understanding and managing their mental health. This observation indicates that students in this generation are vulnerable to mental health problems. However, there is a phenomenon where adolescents respond positively to studies and discussions related to mental health (Purnomosidi et al., 2023).

Therefore, the idea of mental health needs to be introduced as public education, especially for adolescents, regarding the importance of mental health awareness. This study is a continuation of previous studies, focusing on cases of suicide in adolescents and their relationship to mental health. This study is different from previous studies, not only because it focuses on the topic of mental health and adolescent suicide, but also adds a case study of suicide that is rampant, especially in Indonesia. As a supporter of the previous description, there are two problem formulations that will be explained in this article, namely, first, what are cases of suicide in adolescents in Indonesia? Second, how important is mental health for adolescents? Third, what is the relationship between mental health and suicidal behavior?.

Methodology

The research method applied in this article is qualitative with a focus on the type of case study research, which is complemented by the literature study method. Sugiyono (2015) emphasized that qualitative research methods emerged along with changes in the research paradigm, where researchers became the main instrument in investigating the natural conditions of research objects (Abdussamad, 2008). This study specifically chooses the type of case study, an in-depth approach to individuals, groups, organizations, activity programs, and the like in a certain period of time. The goal is to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth description of the entity being studied, as well as to produce data for analysis that can contribute to the development of theory (Muhammad Hasan. Tuti Khairani Harahap, Syahrial Hasibuan, 2022).

This study also utilizes the literature study method or literature review. According to Danial and Warsiah, literature study involves researchers in collecting books, magazines, and scientific articles related to the problem and objectives of the study. The purpose of this approach is to explore various theories that are relevant to the issue being investigated, as a basis for discussing research findings. This writing uses the literature

review method, focusing on research results related to the topic or research variables (Danial dan Wasriah, 2009). Through a qualitative research approach using case studies and literature study methods, this study can provide a comprehensive understanding of mental health in cases of adolescent suicide.

Result and Discussion

Results of Teenage Suicide Cases

1. In Semarang, there were two suspected suicide incidents. The first involved NJW (20), a student from Ngaliyan, Semarang, who was found dead at the Paragon Mall in Semarang on Tuesday (10/10/2023). Meanwhile, the second case involved a private college student in Semarang, EN (24) from Kapuas, Central Kalimantan, who died in her boarding room on Wednesday (11/10/2023). In both incidents, police found wills believed to have been written by the victims before deciding to end their lives. Police statements highlighted the possibility of internal problems in the victims' families or personal lives.
2. A student from the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) of Widya Mandira Catholic University, with the initials ARD, was found dead due to hanging himself in his room in Penfui Timur Village, Kupang Tengah District, East Nusa Tenggara, on Tuesday, October 31, 2023. Friends and family stated that the victim tended to be withdrawn and rarely talked about his personal problems, so no one knew about the problems the victim was facing.
3. An 18-year-old student from UMY, with the initials SM, was found dead after falling from the fourth floor of the UMY female dormitory, Bantul, Yogyakarta, on Monday, October 2, 2023. Before her death, the victim attempted suicide by swallowing 20 headache pills on October 1, 2023. The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs stated that the student had mental health problems and had been recommended for psychological counseling (Damayanti, 2023).
4. A University of Indonesia (UI) student with the initials MPD was found dead after jumping from the 18th floor of an apartment in the Kebayoran Baru area, South Jakarta, on Wednesday, March 8, 2023. Before his action, the victim communicated with his family and friends via Instagram story.
5. A student from Gadjah Mada University (UGM) identified by the initials TSR, ended his life by jumping from the 11th floor of the Porta Hotel, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The authorities stated that the victim allegedly committed suicide due to psychological disorders, and this was supported by a letter of psychological examination results found in the victim's bag (Dwi, 2023).
6. A 15-year-old teenager with the initials AR was found dead from hanging himself in an apartment in Cakung, East Jakarta, on Sunday, East Jakarta, on Sunday (6/8/2023). The victim's family admitted that AR had tried to commit suicide several times before (Mansur, 2023).
7. An 18-year-old teenager known by the initials TJS was found dead after jumping from the Soekarno-Hatta (Suhat) Bridge, Lowokwaru, Malang City, East Java, on Friday afternoon, May 26, 2023. Although the reason for his suicide is not yet known, TJS had previously tried to end his life in the same place several months earlier, but the attempt was successfully prevented (Faruq, 2023).

8. Several cases of suicide by NTT students (AMA, 2023) :
 - a. A student at Widya Mandira University, Kupang, with the initials ARD (24) was found dead due to hanging himself in his room in Penfui Timur Village, Kupang City. The victim had rarely been to campus since 2023, the reason was unclear, and he often isolated himself in his boarding room.
 - b. On Monday (10/23/2023), a student at the Kupang State Health Polytechnic, with the initials AL (26), jumped from the Liliba Bridge in Kupang City. Although the victim's parents came with the excuse of graduation, the victim had not actually completed several assignments and felt threatened with dropping out, so he decided to commit suicide.
 - c. A student in Ruteng, with the initials R (24), died due to suicide by hanging himself in the bathroom in early October 2023. The public does not know much about this case, but it is suspected that the victim ended his life due to romantic problems.

According to a Psychology Lecturer at Nusa Cendana University, Kupang, Indra Yohanes Kiling stated that the causes of suicide among NTT students have not been well studied, but factors such as neurobiology could be the cause.

Several regions in Indonesia, such as Semarang, Kupang, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Malang, and Ruteng, have witnessed several cases of teenage suicide. Several victims left wills or attempted suicide before the tragedy. Several teenagers had a history of mental health disorders and were recommended for psychological counseling. The cases were thought to be related to personal, family, or romantic problems, and involved various suicide attempts, such as jumping from heights or bridges. Awareness of the importance of mental health support and suicide prevention among teenagers is a deep concern.

Discussion

The Importance of Adolescent Mental Health

In general, from the perspective of health promotion and problem prevention, a comprehensive mental health intervention framework should encompass risk factors, protective elements, and the optimal development of children, families, schools, and communities. Mental health promotion refers to systematic efforts aimed at improving individuals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes to foster emotional resilience, social competence, and overall psychological well-being. In contrast, prevention focuses on proactive interventions designed to reduce risk factors and strengthen protective mechanisms across different population groups. Universal interventions, such as school-based mental health education and public awareness campaigns, target the general population to promote emotional literacy and destigmatize mental illness. Meanwhile, selective interventions are directed toward individuals or groups identified as being at higher risk, such as adolescents exhibiting early signs of depression or those exposed to adverse life events, and may involve counseling, peer-support initiatives, or targeted psychosocial programs. By integrating these two approaches, mental health promotion and prevention collectively contribute to building a supportive environment that prioritizes early detection, continuous care, and sustainable well-being. Such comprehensive strategies are essential in mitigating the onset of severe psychological disorders and reducing suicide risk among adolescents. (Adelman & Taylor, 2006).

1. Definition of Mental Health

Mental Health or Mental Hygiene, from the etymology of "mental" (soul) and "hygiene" (health science), is part of mental health science that aims to prevent mental disorders or illnesses. The following is the definition of mental health according to experts:

- a) Kartini Kartono (2000) emphasizes "mental health as a discipline of knowledge that examines mental health issues, seeks to prevent and cure mental disorders, and advance mental health."
- b) According to Jalaludin (2010) and Abdul Hamid (2017), "mental health includes conditions free from complaints and mental health problems, both neurosis and psychosis, with adjustment to the social environment."
- c) Agung Rai (2016) added that "mentally healthy people are free from mental disorders, have the ability to adapt, and can overcome challenges, have harmony in mental function, and utilize their potential to the maximum."

Thus, mental health, holistically, includes a state of mind and spirit that is free from mental disorders or illnesses, including neurosis and psychosis. The goal is to prevent mental problems, reduce or cure mental disorders, and improve the mental well-being of individuals. An optimal state of mental health describes a person who can adapt to their social environment, feel safe and happy in various situations, is able to introspect, control themselves, has harmony in mental functions, and feels valuable, useful, happy, and utilizes personal potential to the maximum (Handayani, 2022).

2. Mental Health Characteristics

Mental health characteristics can be reflected from positive mental characteristics, as described by Yusuf (2011). Some of these characteristics include:

Personal Aspects	Characteristics
Physique	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Normal development b. Functions to perform its tasks c. Healthy, not sickly
Psychic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Respecting oneself and others b. Having insight and humor intelligence c. Showing normal emotional responses d. Being able to think realistically and objectively e. Being psychologically free from disturbances f. Being creative and innovative g. Being open and flexible, not defensive h. Having the right to choose, express opinions, and act freely
Social	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Having empathy and compassion for others, and being happy to help those who need help (altruistic attitude) b. Being able to establish healthy, loving, and friendly relationships with others c. Being tolerant and willing to accept regardless of social class, education level, politics, religion, ethnicity, race, or skin color.
Moral – Religious	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have faith in God, and obey His teachings

	b. Be open, trustworthy (responsible), and sincere in behavior
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Table 1. Characteristics of a Mentally Healthy Person

3. Mental Disorders in Adolescents

Mental health disorders refer to a variety of behaviors and emotional conditions that can cause sufferers to suffer or engage in self-destructive behavior. The impact of these disorders is very serious, including significant negative effects on individual performance, social interaction abilities, and can even endanger oneself, others, or a community. According to Burlian (2016), signs of mental health disorders include (Ardiansyah et al., 2023)

- a. Many inner conflicts
 - 1) The sufferer experiences conflict between thoughts and emotions that are antagonistic, resulting in loss of self-esteem and self-confidence.
 - 2) Constantly feeling insecure, chased by unclear thoughts or feelings, causing anxiety and fear.
 - 3) Aggressive expressions, even to the point of trying to harm others or committing suicide (inward aggression)
- b. Social communication is disrupted and there is social disorientation
 - 1) The emergence of false thoughts that cause fear or a feeling of being very superior (delusion of grandeur).
 - 2) Feelings of envy and suspicion, possibly accompanied by delusions of persecution or fantasies of being chased, which can trigger aggressive behavior, destruction, or self-destruction.
- c. Serious intellectual and emotional disorders
 - 1) Sufferers experience false perceptions, excessive sensory experiences, and incorrect views, accompanied by an inability to control emotions and excessive reactions (overacting).
 - 2) Tend to fall asleep in an imaginary world created in imagination as a place of refuge.
 - 3) The emergence of negative perceptions of outsiders, who are considered sinful, dirty, or evil, resulting in chaos in social reality and chaotic inner turmoil

4. Impact of Mental Health Disorders

The impact of mental health disorders can affect various aspects of a person's life and health. Some possible consequences are:

- a. Difficulty in building healthy relationships.
- b. series of physical complaints, including muscle pain, headaches, and digestive problems.
- c. Complexity of various types of mental health disorders (Amelia, 2022)
- d. Significant mood swings.
- e. Becoming isolated and reluctant to socialize.
- f. Expression of thoughts or plans that can cause harm to oneself or others (Dianawuri, 2022).
- g. Risk of physical health disorders such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, insomnia, headaches, and respiratory disorders.

- h. Difficulty in building social relationships, financial problems, potential risk of behavior that is harmful to oneself or others, feelings of isolation from the environment, and feeling alone (Fadli, 2023) .

In research on resilient children and youth, common indicators of positive outcomes include various aspects such as academic achievement (e.g., grades, test scores, school retention, and high school graduation); behavior (adherence to rules versus antisocial behavior); peer acceptance and friendships; normative mental health (few symptoms of internalizing or externalizing behavior problems); and participation in age-appropriate activities (such as extracurricular activities, sports, and community service). Most studies also incorporate multiple indicators to assess overall functioning or success, rather than relying on a single domain (Tugade et al., 2016).

Mental health disorders that are not immediately treated can cause a number of physical health problems in affected individuals. Therefore, efforts to maintain mental health and prevent mental health disorders require certain actions. Some appropriate steps that can be taken involve participating in physical activity, adopting a healthy diet, avoiding unhealthy habits, meditating, and building strong social support to manage stress.

From the explanation above, mental health is important because it affects the level of happiness and the ability to adapt to an individual. Mental health disorders in adolescents can have serious impacts, including difficulties in relationships and the potential risk of physical disorders. The importance of preventive measures, such as through physical activity, healthy diet, and social support, is key to maintaining mental health.

Relationship between Mental Health and Teenage Suicide Cases

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that some teenagers who become victims of suicide face mental health problems. For example, the case of a female student at UMY who has a mental health disorder and is advised to undergo psychological counseling, as well as a teenager in Cakung, East Jakarta, who has attempted suicide several times before. This explanation highlights that individuals with mental health disorders may experience inner conflict, difficulty communicating, and even have thoughts of harming themselves or others. These signs need to be considered as an indication of mental difficulties

With indications of mental health disorders in several cases, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between mental health and cases of teenage suicide. Mental health disorders can act as a trigger or contributor to the decision to commit suicide in teenagers, as seen in several cases presented. Therefore, maintaining mental health is very important, and providing support and seeking help from mental health professionals is necessary, especially if someone seems to be having difficulties.

Conclusion

Based on the findings discussed above, this study concludes that there is a significant correlation between mental health conditions and the occurrence of suicide among adolescents. The analysis of several cases revealed that many victims exhibited symptoms of psychological distress, including inner conflict, communication barriers, and self-harming ideation, all of which reflect underlying mental health disorders. These findings reinforce the argument that poor mental health substantially contributes to the

development of suicidal tendencies during adolescence. Consequently, maintaining psychological well-being through early detection, consistent emotional support, and access to professional mental health services is essential for suicide prevention. Furthermore, the results emphasize the need for collaborative efforts among families, educational institutions, and health professionals to create a supportive environment that fosters resilience and adaptive coping strategies among youth. In addressing the research objectives, this study underscores that strengthening adolescent mental health is not only a clinical or individual concern but a broader public health priority vital for reducing the incidence of suicide.

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