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Depression Levels and Coping Strategies Among Adolescent Drug Users at Rumah Orbit Surabaya, Indonesia: A Mini Report

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Abstract: This brief investigation checks into how depression levels and ways of dealing with problems are related among teenage drug users who are getting help at Rumah Orbit Surabaya, a drug rehab centre in Indonesia. The study used a correlational analytic approach and looked at 32 teenage drug users: 10 were admitted for inpatient care and 22 were getting therapy outside of school. The requirements for inclusion are that the teens must be involved in rehabilitation and have good social skills. Teenagers who are already drug-free are not eligible. The Beck Depression Inventory questionnaire and the Ways of Coping Checklist were used to gather data. The results show a clear connection between the subjects' coping strategies and how depressed they were. Findings show that teens who use drugs are more likely to use unhealthy ways to deal with their problems when they are depressed. In particular, most of them showed signs of borderline sadness, and a big chunk of them used unhealthy ways to deal with their problems. On the other hand, people with moderate depression were more likely to use adaptive coping techniques. This study adds to our knowledge of how sadness affects how teenage drug users deal with stress in a rehabilitation setting. Recommendations include interventions that are targeted to the severity of sadness to help people in this vulnerable group get better at therapy and coping. In the future, researchers could look into longitudinal effects and intervention methods that are better suited to people with different levels of depression in similar situations.

Key Words: Adolescent drug users; Depression levels; Coping strategies; Rehabilitation center; Surabaya

INTRODUCTION

Depression is characterised by a diminished sense of agency and the intense emotional distress experienced by an individual. Depression encompasses symptoms such as diminished energy and interest, guilt, impaired concentration, reduced appetite, and contemplation of death or suicide. (Rusdiana, 2017). Indicators of depression include shifts in activity levels, diminished cognitive capacities, and modified speech patterns. (Sadock et al., 2009). Individuals experiencing mild, moderate, and severe depression employ adaptive coping strategies to address their challenges. These strategies may include sharing narratives with others, engaging in positive activities such as sports or religious practices, or using their leisure time to visit the library. However, a significant number of children will employ maladaptive strategies when making decisions, such as engaging in substance abuse and experimentation, perpetrating acts of violence, and engaging in other forms of juvenile delinquency, including encounters with law enforcement authorities.

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The prevalence of depression or life challenges among adolescents has a consequential effect, leading to the development of diverse coping mechanisms in order to address the encountered difficulties. Coping is a strategy employed by individuals to address and resolve issues, as well as adapt to cognitive and behavioural changes. Adaptive coping refers to strategies that can be employed to effectively overcome challenges. Examples of adaptive coping include engaging in positive conversations with friends and seeking counselling to share personal experiences. Based on research conducted on students aged 17-18 years in Sweden and Italy, the prevalence of drug addiction is 15% and 43%, respectively. In 2006, a survey conducted among a cohort of students aged 11-15 years in the UK revealed that 17% of the respondents had engaged in drug addiction. In the United States, there has been a significant increase in marijuana consumption among adolescents between 2002 and 2013, particularly among 12th and 10th grade students (Sturkenboom et al., 2008). The National Narcotics Agency (BNN) noted that drug users in Indonesia in 2017 reached 3.3 million people or 1.77 percent of the total Indonesian population of productive age and adolescent age (Musran & Siregar, 2021). According to data collected by the East Java Health Office (Dinkes) and the East Java National Narcotics Agency (BNN), there were 238,680 individuals, which accounted for 27.3 percent of the total number of drug users in East Java in 2017, amounting to 884,000 people. The Surabaya City National Narcotics Agency (BNNK) has observed a rise in drug abuse over the past two years. (Nurmala et al., 2020).

The rising prevalence of substance abuse among teenagers is attributed to contributing factors such as depression, inability to meet expectations, physical and psychological ailments, while enabling factors encompass parental separation, environmental and school influences, social dynamics, bullying, and peer influence (Whitesell et al., 2013). Adolescence is a susceptible stage of life where individuals are prone to being swayed by novel stimuli, including a sense of curiosity towards various enticing experiences, such as alcohol, shabu, narcotics, and illicit substances. They believe that consuming it will induce a sense akin to flying or floating and help alleviate some of the accumulated ideas in the brain. The prevalence of depression and life challenges among adolescents has a significant influence on the coping mechanisms employed by individuals to address these issues (Dumont & Provost, 1999). If teenagers are already employing maladaptive coping strategies to evade the challenges they are encountering, then rehabilitation endeavours should be undertaken utilising suitable methodologies. This rehabilitation programme aims to decrease the severity of depression and enhance individuals' understanding of adaptive strategies to cope with future challenges following their discharge from the rehabilitation centre.

The authors are interested in the relationship between depression levels and coping strategies among drug users in Rumah Orbit Surabaya, as described in the previous study. In November 2018, at Rumah Orbit Surabaya, a drug rehabilitation clinic, there were 10 youngsters admitted for drug misuse cases, while more than 40 teenagers got hospitalisation for drug-related issues.

METHOD

This study used a correlational analytic research design. The study population consisted of all adolescent drug users who received rehabilitation at Rumah Orbit Surabaya, including 10 teenagers who were hospitalised and 22 teenage drug users who received outpatient therapy at Rumah Orbit Surabaya.

The criteria for this study include (1) Teenage drug users who are currently undergoing drug rehabilitation at Rumah Orbit Surabaya, and (2) Teenage drug users at Rumah Orbit Surabaya who possess good interpersonal skills. (3) Adolescent drug users receiving inpatient and outpatient therapy at Rumah Orbit Surabaya. Exclusive criteria include adolescent drug users who have achieved complete recovery and are no longer dependant on drugs. The instrument used in this research is (Beck et al., 1988) and the ways of coping checklist (Vitaliano et al., 1985).

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The analysis of the relationship between the level of depression and the coping mechanisms of adolescent drug users indicates a significant finding. The p-value of 0.001, which is less than the threshold of 0.05, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is indeed a relationship between the level of depression and the coping mechanisms of adolescent drug users.

Out of the total sample of participants, 21 adolescents exhibited maladaptive coping mechanisms, whereas 11 adolescents with moderate depression displayed adaptive coping mechanisms. Based on the study conducted at Surabaya orbital house, it was determined that the majority of drug users surveyed met the criteria for clinical depression, specifically 25 respondents (78.1%) exhibited borderline depression, while a smaller proportion of respondents, 7 individuals (21.9%), showed moderate depression. The study conducted at Surabaya orbital house revealed that the majority of adolescent drug users employed maladaptive coping techniques, with 21 respondents (65.6%) falling into this category. Additionally, nearly half of the respondents, namely 11 individuals (34.4%), utilised adaptive coping mechanisms. A correlation exists between the severity of depression and the coping strategies employed by adolescent drug users residing in Orbit House in Surabaya.

The presence of mild to moderate levels of depression in employed adults tends to prompt teenagers to employ adaptive coping strategies. However, if depression levels are high or escalate to moderate or severe, adolescents are more likely to resort to maladaptive coping techniques. Indeed, there exists a correlation between the severity of depression and the coping strategies employed by adolescent drug users. This is evident from the findings of a study conducted on adolescents with clinical depression and borderline depression.

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