

ADOLESCENT LONELINESS IN ORPHANAGES: ROLES OF SELF-COMPASSION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

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ABSTRAK

Pendahuluan: Remaja panti asuhan rentan mengalami permasalahan, salah satunya adalah perasaan kesepian atau *loneliness*. *Loneliness* atau kesepian yang dirasakan oleh remaja panti asuhan cenderung diakibatkan oleh tidak tercapainya dukungan sosial yang diinginkan, sehingga remaja panti tidak merasakan kepuasan dengan hubungan sosial yang dijalani. Salah satu cara untuk mengurangi perasaan *loneliness* atau kesepian pada remaja panti adalah dengan memiliki *self-compassion*. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara *self-compassion* dan dukungan sosial dengan *loneliness* pada remaja di Panti Pondok Pesantren Perkampungan Minangkabau Padang. **Metode:** Jenis penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian adalah kuantitatif berupa desain *cross sectional*. Populasi dalam penelitian adalah remaja panti pondok pesantren perkampungan minangkabau sebanyak 365 orang dan jumlah sampel sebanyak 155 subjek dengan teknik *simple random sampling*. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan *UCLA Loneliness Sacle (Version 3)*, *Self-Compassion Scale* dan *Multidimensional Scale Of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)*. **Hasil:** Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata *loneliness* sebesar 43.02, *self-compassion* sebesar 82.66, dukungan sosial sebesar 29.51. Ada hubungan antara *self-compassion* ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$ dan $r = -0,457$), dan dukungan sosial ($p\text{-value} = 0,000$ dan $r = -0,407$) dengan *loneliness* remaja di panti asuhan. **Diskusi:** Berdasarkan hasil penelitian ini, diharapkan pihak wali asuh panti membuat kebijakan seperti memberikan bimbingan konseling yang ada dipanti dan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler yang bisa mengurangi rasa *loneliness*..

Kata Kunci: remaja, *self-compassion*, dukungan sosial, *loneliness*

ABSTRACT

Background: Orphanage adolescents are vulnerable to experiencing psychological issues, one of which is loneliness. Loneliness among orphaned adolescents tends to be caused by unmet social support, resulting in dissatisfaction with their social relationships. One effective way to reduce loneliness in orphaned adolescents is through self-compassion. **Objective:** This study aims to explore the relationship between self-compassion and social support with loneliness among adolescents in the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage, Padang. **Method:** This research employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design. The population consisted of 365 adolescents from the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage, with a sample of 155 participants selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3), the Self-Compassion Scale, and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS). **Results:** The study found that the average loneliness score was 43.02, self-compassion was 82.66, and social support was 29.51. A significant relationship was found between self-compassion ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$; $r = -0.457$) and social support ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$; $r = -0.407$) with the level of loneliness among adolescents in the orphanage. **Discussions:** Based on these findings, it is recommended that orphanage guardians develop supportive policies, such as implementing counselling services and offering extracurricular activities to help reduce feelings of loneliness.

Keywords: adolescents, self-compassion, social support, loneliness

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents represent the largest population compared to other age groups, with the global population being around 7.2 billion, over 3 billion of whom are under 25 years old, and 1.2 billion of that population are adolescents aged 10-19 years, which equals 18% of the global population. The total adolescent population in Indonesia is estimated to be 46.9 million (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2024).

The adolescent period is a transition from childhood to adulthood (Illahi *et al.*, 2018). The adolescent period is a time for adaptation to biological, cognitive, psychological, and emotional changes. The biological changes that occur during adolescence include puberty, and many adolescents experience physical changes that are disproportionate or physical conditions that do not meet expectations (Nursyamsiyah, Fatah and Ariyanti, 2024).

During adolescence, there is a great need for love, affection, and attention from family, friends, or close people in the environment, peers, or those in the residential

area; however, not all adolescents receive this, and various events that occur in adolescent life, such as the loss of parents due to death, divorce, or insufficient economic conditions, cause adolescents to be placed in orphanages (Theresianie, 2021). Orphanages themselves are institutions that operate in the social field to help children who no longer have parents or have been abandoned by their parents, and residing in an orphanage is not easy for a child, especially for those who have just entered their teenage years because they do not receive the warmth of affection that is given by biological parents (Barbarosa, Putri and Chusairi, 2021). It is hoped that the adolescents living in orphanages can feel happiness, affection, attention, education, and good social experiences through caregivers and friends in the orphanage; however, the majority of adolescents living in orphanages tend to feel anxious, sad, lack good friends, receive little attention, and feel isolated from the social environment, and this sense of isolation from the social environment is referred to as the feeling of loneliness (Theresianie, 2021).

In general, loneliness is defined as a state of inner unrest that may be experienced when there is a gap between the currently felt interpersonal relationships and the relationships that are expected to occur (Zhang and Dong, 2022). Teenagers, especially those living in orphanages, feel a greater sense of loneliness due to a lack of trust in others, feelings of shame and inferiority, leading them to withdraw from social interactions, feelings of sadness due to not having parents, and the absence of friends to share their thoughts with (Sagita, Rifayanti and Rasyid, 2022).

According to Russel (in Nasution, 2022), aspects of loneliness are based on three factors: personality, social desirability, and depression. In terms of personality, individuals can be described as quiet, passive, not overly obsessive, cautious, closed-off, attentive, pessimistic, restless, and uncontrolled. Regarding social desirability, a person will exhibit behaviours deemed inappropriate within a social culture. Lastly, in terms of depression, an individual may experience feelings of sadness, gloom, lack of enthusiasm, and feelings of worthlessness.

Based on the research results of Theresianie (2021), loneliness among adolescents is categorized as high for 8 subjects (7%), moderate for 86 subjects (78%), and low for 16 subjects (15%), which means that in general, orphans still receive limited social support, leading them to tend to feel loneliness. In the study by Sulaiman (2019), it was found that 22.89% of orphans experience depression syndromes, whether mild or severe. This occurs due to parental death, conflict, and loss of warmth within the family, traumatic events, and bullying that lead them to feel alone and lonely. This sense of loneliness causes more psychological problems among orphans, with a percentage of 18.3%-47.0% compared to adolescents living with birth families at a percentage of 9%-11% (Khatab and Mursyida, 2021).

The impacts of loneliness felt by orphans need to be reduced, so there are several efforts that can be made. In a social environment, an orphan adolescent must think positively about their social surroundings so that they do not feel pressured by others (Hidayati, 2015). Thus, they feel comfortable in building relationships with their social environment. Adolescents in orphanages must learn to manage their emotions so that they can think about steps ahead to reduce the loneliness they experience (Narang, 2014).

Loneliness in adolescents is caused by several factors, including situational factors, personality, self-compassion, and social support. In situational factors, where the situation describes how individuals can establish social contact and relationships with new people, if the individual cannot build relationships with new people, it can lead to loneliness or discomfort. Furthermore, personality factors that can impact someone's loneliness include low self-esteem, feelings of shame, self-awareness, introversion, and lack of assertiveness (Jauhar, 2019).

One of the factors of loneliness is self-compassion, which is the care for oneself when facing failures compared to self-criticism, the presence of caring feelings and efforts to support oneself when experiencing problems (Yarnell *et al.*, 2015). Orphaned adolescents who have self-compassion will accept the discrepancies with a sense of calm, thus opening self-awareness, instead of avoiding and disconnecting from that condition (Sari and Yendi, 2018).

The research conducted by Elfaza and Rizal (2020) titled the relationship between self-compassion and loneliness in adolescents at a Boarding School in SMP Kabupaten Solok, West Sumatra, found that there is a significant relationship between self-compassion and loneliness, with a value of $r = -0.385$, which correlates negatively. This is due to the three positive components of self-compassion, which consist of self-kindness,

feeling of commonality, and mindfulness, correlating negatively with loneliness. Meanwhile, the three negative components of self-compassion, namely self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification, correlate positively with loneliness.

Furthermore, there are factors that cause loneliness according to Perlman and Peplau (Theresianie, 2021), namely social support factors which include family support, peer support, and situational characteristics. Social support is a form of attention, appreciation, encouragement, acceptance, and assistance in other forms that comes from people who have close social relationships, such as parents, siblings, children, friends, acquaintances, or others to help someone when experiencing difficult situations (Ibrahim, Musawwir and Alim, 2021).

Preliminary survey results obtained through interviews with orphanage directors revealed that, despite efforts to offer attention to all adolescents, the restricted number of caregivers has resulted in many teens appearing withdrawn and receiving inadequate attention. Observations and interviews also revealed that these adolescents tend to isolate themselves, as opposed to their peers, who often participate in larger social contacts. Many seemed preoccupied with personal difficulties, internalised their problems, suffered emotions of inadequacy, voiced discontent with their life circumstances, and saw themselves as ignored and burdened owing to being placed in the orphanage.

METHOD

This type of research is quantitative research using an analytic design with a cross-sectional study approach. This research was conducted at the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage in January 2025. The population in this study is all the students of the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage, totalling 365 students. A sample of 155 students was taken using the Simple

Random Sampling technique. The instruments used in this study are loneliness, self-compassion, and social support questionnaires. This study pays attention to the basic principles of research ethics, which include: Anonymity, Confidentiality, Beneficence, Respect for humans, and Justice. The data were analysed with univariate analysis to see the frequency distribution of dependent and independent variable data, and bivariate analysis to determine the relationship between self-compassion and social support with loneliness using Pearson's test.

RESULTS

The results of this study consist of univariate analysis and bivariate analysis, which are processed and analysed using computerisation. The results of the study are presented as follows:

A. Univariate Analysis

Based on results, the majority of respondents had a level of self-compassion in the moderate category (55.5%), with most also receiving high social support (65.2%). Meanwhile, the level of loneliness in the aspect of emotional isolation was dominated by the moderate category (84.5%), and no respondents experienced high emotional isolation. In the aspect of social isolation, nearly all respondents fell into the moderate category (91.6%), with very few experiencing high social isolation (8.4%). Overall, this data indicates that most respondents have good self-compassion and social support, as well as a tendency towards moderate levels of loneliness, both emotionally and socially (Table 1).

Table 1
Hypothetical Score

Variable	Interval	f	%	Category
Self-Compassion	86,5–130	66	42,6	High
	44,5–86,5	86	55,5	Medium
	1–44,5	3	1,9	Low
Social Support	32,3–48	101	65,2	High
	17–32,3	54	34,8	Medium
	1–17	0	0	Low
Loneliness				
Emotional	16,5–24	0	0	High
Isolation	8,5–16,5	131	84,5	Medium
	1–8,5	24	15,5	Low
Sosial Isolation	37,5–56	13	8,4	High
	19,5–37,5	142	91,6	Medium
	1–19,5	0	0	Low

Table 2
Self-Compassion, Social Support, and Loneliness Scores

Variable	Numbers	Theoretical Score			
		Mi n	Ma x	Mea n	SD
Self-Compassion	26	1	130	65,5	21
Social Support	12	1	48	40,5	13
Loneliness	20	1	80	24,5	7,8

Table 2 explained that the results of the study on 155 respondents yielded interesting average scores related to the variables of Self-compassion, Social Support, and Loneliness among the 155 respondents. Based on Table 1 above, the Self-Compassion variable was measured using 26 items with a hypothetical score range of 1 to 130, resulting in an average score (mean) of 65.5 and a standard deviation (SD) of 21. The Social Support variable was measured using 12 items, with a score range of 1 to 48, resulting in an average score of 40.5 and an SD of 13. Meanwhile, the Loneliness variable was

measured using 20 items, with a hypothetical score ranging from 1 to 80, resulting in an average score of 24.5 and an SD of 7.8.

B. Bivariate Analysis

Table 3

Bivariate Analysis of Self-Compassion and Social Support with Loneliness

Variable	r_s	r_s^2	P-value
Self-Compassion Loneliness	-0,457	0,2088 (20,08%)	0,000
Social Support Loneliness	-0,407	0,1656 (16,56%)	0,000

Based on the research results, there is a significant negative relationship. The correlation coefficient (r_s) of -0.457 indicates that the lower the level of self-compassion a person has, the higher the level of loneliness they experience. The r_s^2 value of 0.2088 (20.08%) shows that approximately 20% of the variation in feelings of loneliness can be explained by the level of self-compassion. The correlation coefficient (r_s) of -0.407 indicates that the lower the level of social support received by a person, the higher the level of loneliness they experience. The r_s^2 value of 0.1656 (16.56%) shows that about 16.5% of the variation in feelings of loneliness can be explained by social support. Additionally, the P-value = 0.000 (P-value < 0.01) confirms that this result is statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

Self-Compassion and Loneliness Among Adolescents

The results of this study show that there is a significant relationship in a negative direction that the higher the level of self-compassion a person has, the lower the level of loneliness they feel. This research is consistent with that conducted by Lia Aulia

Fachrial and Nadira Maulydia (2023), which obtained an r value of -0.631 and a p -value of 0.00, indicating a significant negative relationship between self-compassion and loneliness. Another study supported by Sugianto, Sutanto and Suwartono (2020) on students in Jabodetabek obtained an r value of -0.533, p -value of 0.01.

Self-compassion is the feeling of caring for oneself when facing failure as opposed to criticising oneself, with the presence of care and effort to support oneself when experiencing problems (Yarnell *et al.*, 2015). Orphanage adolescents who have self-compassion will accept discrepancies with a sense of calm, thus opening self-awareness, rather than avoiding and disconnecting from the situation (Sari and Yendi, 2018). Self-compassion can describe how individuals can establish social contact and relationships with new people; if individuals are unable to forge relationships with new people, it can lead to loneliness or discomfort.

The feeling of loneliness is more deeply felt by orphanage adolescents due to a lack of trust in others, feeling ashamed and inferior, leading to a tendency to withdraw from socializing, feeling sad because they do not have parents, and the absence of friends to share thoughts with (Sagita, Rifayanti and Rasyid, 2022). Most adolescents living in orphanages tend to feel anxious, sad, lack close friends, receive little attention, and feel alienated from their social environment, and this alienation from the social environment is referred to as the feeling of loneliness (Theresianie, 2021).

Self-compassion can help individuals manage negative emotions (Elfaza and Rizal, 2020). When foster children have low self-compassion, they struggle to reduce the loneliness they experience. However, by having higher self-compassion, they can minimise the loneliness they feel. The personality factors that can impact loneliness in a person include low self-esteem, feelings of shame, self-awareness, introversion, and

lack of assertiveness (Jauhar, 2019). The Relationship of Social Support with Loneliness Among Adolescents in the Islamic Boarding School of Minangkabau Padang.

Based on the results of the analysis between social support and feelings of loneliness show a significant relationship in a negative direction, indicating that the higher the level of social support received by an individual, the lower the level of loneliness they feel. This research is in line with Anisa (2022) obtained a value of $r = -0.698$ and a p -value of 0.00, which means there is a significant negative relationship between self-compassion and loneliness. This study is supported by Oktaviani (2024) found a value of $r = -0.734$ and a p -value of 0.00. Social support is a form of attention, appreciation, motivation, acceptance, and assistance in other forms that comes from people who have close social relationships, such as parents, siblings, children, friends, or others, to help someone during difficult situations (Ibrahim, Musawwir and Alim, 2021). Social support is essential in the lives of individuals, especially teenagers living in orphanages. Teenagers in orphanages tend to feel anxious, sad, lack good friends, receive little attention, and feel isolated from their social environment, and this alienation from the social environment is referred to as the feeling of loneliness. According to Russell (Anisa, 2022), loneliness is a feeling experienced by someone that is subjective due to the lack of intimacy or closeness in relationships. This condition can be caused by significant changes in social life. Loneliness is a concern based on the feelings experienced when engaging in social relationships characterised by not having friends or even having undesirable friends, as well as social relationships that are outside of expectations or hopes. The authors analyzes that is influenced not merely by the number of social connections, but by the depth and quality of those interactions. Adequate social support

from close individuals plays a crucial role in alleviating loneliness by fulfilling emotional needs and fostering a sense of connectedness. The support needed by individuals is a type of assistance in the form of emotional, material, and informational support from close individuals who are significant to them.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research that has been conducted on the relationship between self-compassion and social support with loneliness among adolescents at the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage. The following conclusions can be made is average loneliness among adolescents is 43.02 (moderate category), self-compassion is 82.66 (moderate category), and social support is 29.51 (moderate category). There is a relationship between self-compassion and social support with loneliness among adolescents at the Minangkabau Islamic boarding school orphanage ($r=-0.457$; $r=-0.407$). It is recommended that orphanage guardians develop supportive policies, such as implementing counselling services because adolescents often feel that there is no one close to them and cannot talk about their problems with others. Beside that, offering extracurricular activities can help reduce feelings of loneliness.

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