

Life Satisfaction And Its Relationship Between Mental Health Among Orphan Adolescents

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among orphan adolescents in Malaysia. The sample comprised of 240 orphan adolescents selected through the multistage sampling method. The validated Malay version of Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale 21 Items (DASS21) used in this study to measure life satisfaction and mental health among orphan adolescents. This correlation analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and depression, anxiety and stress among orphan adolescents. Results explained that all parties including government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), orphanages and guardians need to organize actions such as the implementation of intervention programs and treatments to ensure the continuity of mental health among orphan adolescents.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Mental Health, Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Orphan Adolescents

1. Introduction

Mental health is an important element for people to live a good and healthy life. According to the World Health Organization (2015) [1], adolescents who have good mental health can handle normal stresses in life and able to contribute to the community. However, individuals who suffer from mental health disorders are often associated with those who suffer from psychological problems and emotional disorders such as depression, anxiety and stress (Mohammadzadeh, Awang, Sahar & Ismail, 2017a)[2].

Previous studies have shown that there is an increase in serious mental health disorders among adolescents across the country (Mohammadzadeh, Awang, Shahar & Ismail, 2017a; Chen, Zhang, Pan, Hu, Liu, & Luo, 2017; Aud, Kewal Ramani, Frohlich, 2011) [2][3][4]. The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) (2017) statistics, revealed that there are adolescents aged 13 to 17 who experience mental health problems. One in five people suffer from depression (18.3 percent), two in every five people suffer from anxiety symptoms (39.7 percent) and one in every 10 people experience stress (9.6 percent) (Portal Myhealth, 2021) [5].

According to Marais, Sharp, Pappin, Lenka, Cloete, Skinner & Serekoane (2013) [6] every adolescent has the right to have a prosperous life such as getting attention and love from parents, getting a perfect education and getting support from people around. However, there are groups that are not as fortunate, such as orphan adolescents (Rahayu & Narina, 2012)[7]. Past studies have proven that low life satisfaction factors influence a person to get less happiness and at the same time cause them to experience mental health disorders (He & Ji, 2007; Gilman & Huebner, 2003) [8][9].

2. Problem Statement

The life satisfaction of orphan adolescents is caused by some of the shortcomings they face after the death of their parents. Conditions such as being raised by other caregivers and being raised in orphanages have caused them to experience a situation of deprivation compared to adolescents who live with their parents at home (Zhao et al., 2009) [10]. The group of orphan adolescents is also exposed to difficulties in terms of educational level and unguarded health level which has a negative impact on their quality of life. Therefore, orphan adolescents are seen to have low life satisfaction where this lack of life satisfaction will affect their mental health (Zhao et al., 2009)[10].

Researchers also found that the findings of this study are in line with the study of Zullig, Valois, Huebner and Drane (2005) [11] which shows that low life satisfaction has a significant relationship with a person's mental health. Based on the results of the study, adolescents who have low life satisfaction will cause the occurrence of mental health disorders and it has happened among adolescents aged 13 to 18 years. According to Nickerson and Nagle (2005) [12], the contributors to life satisfaction among adolescents is the involvement of parents and friends. Adolescents who have a relationship of interaction and socialization with their parents contribute to the strengthening of positive and prosperous psychological development. Bumpass & Lu (2000) [13] and Sastre & Ferriere (2000) [14] was proved that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among adolescents. The findings of the study also clearly explain that family structure plays a role in contributing to the life satisfaction of adolescents which is low life satisfaction which results in negative emotions such as anxiety and depression (Mostafaei, Aminpoor & Mohammadkhani, 2012b) [15].

Although studies on mental health in orphan adolescents have been widely conducted abroad (Kaur & Rani, 2016; Bhat, Rahman & Bhat, 2015; Kumar et al., 2014) [16] [17] [18], studies involving orphan adolescents on life satisfaction are still lacking proper attention among researchers in Malaysia. To be clear, information in the field of mental health obtained from orphan adolescents in Malaysia is very limited (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2017b; Hashim et al., 2011) [15][19]. Thus, the researchers were able to explain that the lack of information resources in this group is a challenge to develop effective mental health interventions and treatments for orphan adolescents, especially in the state of Terengganu. Therefore, this study is to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among the respondents studied.

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and Procedure

A total of 240 adolescents from one orphanage center at Terengganu, Malaysia are involved in this study. The orphan adolescent aged 13 to 17 years old who lost biological father and both parents were involved using multi stage sampling.

3.2 Research Instrument

Data collection of life satisfaction was carried out by validated Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). Meanwhile, administered validated Malay version of Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale 21 Item (DASS21) has been used to measure mental health among samples.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) has been developed by Diener et al. (1985)[20]. In this study, researchers have measured life satisfaction used a translated questionnaire by Aishvarya, Maniam, Karuthan, Sidi, Jaafar & Oei (2014)[21] with a high reliability of .86. There are 5 items for the SWLS questionnaire which is the answer format consists of seven likert scales which are (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Strongly Disagree, (3) Disagree, (4) Neutral, (5) Agree, (6) Strongly Agree, (7) Strongly Agree.

Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale 21 Item (DASS21)

Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale version 21 Item (DASS21) is a modified questionnaire from the DASS version of the 42 questionnaire developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995)[22]. The translated DASS21 questionnaire has been used in this study to measure the level of depression, anxiety and stress with reliability (depression, 0.8; anxiety, 0.74 and stress 0.79) (Ramli et al, 2007)[23]. The answer format for this questionnaire consists of four likert scale to describe the samples condition throughout the week before answering the questionnaires from (0) Never, (1) Sometimes, (2) Often and (3) Almost Always.

4. Data Analysis

In this study, the inferential data obtained was proceed and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for WINDOW version 26.0. Methods of inferential statistical analysis of Correlation Pearson were used to determine the correlation between life satisfaction and mental health (depression, anxiety and stress) among the samples.

5. Findings

Based on Table 1, Pearson analysis results show that there is a negative relationship between life satisfaction and depression among orphan adolescents, ($r=-0.164$, $p<0.01$). This means that the lower the life satisfaction, the higher the depression experienced by orphan adolescents. In addition, the findings show that there is a significant negative relationship between life satisfaction and anxiety among orphan adolescents, ($r=-0.193$, $p<0.01$). This explains that the lower the life satisfaction, the higher the anxiety among orphan adolescents. Next, the results show that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and stress among orphan adolescents, ($r=-.234$, $p<0.01$). This explains that the lower the life satisfaction, the higher the pressure experienced by orphan adolescents.

Table 1 : Life Satisfaction And Its Relationship Between Mental Health Of Orphan Adolescents

Variable	Mental Health						
	N	Depression		Anxiety		Stress	
Life Satisfaction	240	R	Sig	R	Sig	R	Sig
		.164**	0.01	.193**	0.01	.234**	0.01

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Life satisfaction is seen as a person's cognitive evaluation of his life as a whole. An individual evaluates his life satisfaction by measuring his quality of life based on unique criteria determined by himself (Pavot & Diener, 1993)[24]. Life satisfaction is related to a person's mental health. According to Diener (1984)[20], a person with high life satisfaction will be happier than those with low life satisfaction. Individuals with low life satisfaction will experience mental health disorders (He & Ji, 2007)[8]. Based on the findings in this study, the findings show that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and mental health (depression, anxiety and stress) among orphan adolescents.

The results of the study show findings that are consistent with past researchers who stated that life satisfaction has a relationship with a person's mental health (Beutell, 2006)[25]. According to Gilman and Huebner (2003)[9], adolescents who have low life satisfaction will experience psychological disorders such as negative emotions and feelings which cause their mental health to be low. Thus, in this study orphan adolescents respondents who have high life satisfaction will have positive mental health while those who have low life satisfaction will experience negative emotions that affect their mental health.

In Malaysia, studies related to the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among adolescents are still underdeveloped (Mohd Fairuz & Shahizan, 2016; Yaacob, Tan, Tan, & Juhari, 2012)[26][27]. In this study, the findings found that there is a significant relationship with mental

health (depression, anxiety and stress) among orphan adolescents who were studied.

According to Chen et al. (2017)[3], the assessment of a person's life satisfaction is not only from a cognitive aspect, but the experiences that occur in life also contribute to the assessment of a person's life satisfaction. Therefore, different experience factors between orphan adolescents have influenced the cognitive and optimistic acceptance of life satisfaction among the respondents. This situation explains that the life satisfaction of adolescents is determined based on the emotional experiences they go through (Siti Rozaina, 2014)[28]. Thus, negative emotional experiences such as the death of a parent that a teenager has gone through also have an impact on his life satisfaction.

Specifically, the researchers found that the results of this study are supported by previous studies abroad (Devi, Sharma & Shekhar, 2015; Mostafaei, Richter & Lemola, 2014; He & Ji; 2007) [29][30][8] where the findings show that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among the adolescents studied. The results of the study also show that adolescents with orphan status have less life satisfaction which has caused them to experience mental health disorders.

According to Richter and Lemola (2014) [31], adolescents' life satisfaction is more influenced by the dynamic characteristics of their own family. Parental support, family ties and integrity in the family are factors that determine teenagers' life satisfaction. Therefore, the higher the integrity, bond and support received from the family, especially the parents, the higher the life satisfaction's adolescents. The results of the study have also proven that adolescents still have parents but lack in terms of the integrity of relationships in the family also have low life satisfaction. For orphan adolescents, they also experience the same situation because they have lost the bond and support from their deceased parents (Richter & Lemola, 2014)[31].

A study related to the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health among orphan adolescents has also been conducted by previous researchers (Bjarnason et al., 2012)[32] where the results of the study show the same findings. The results of the study also prove that adolescents who have different family structures have resulted in them experiencing different life satisfaction. Findings explain that adolescents who have lost their parents have lower life satisfaction than teenagers who still have parents and live with them. This has indirectly resulted in orphan adolescents experiencing higher emotional problems compared to non-orphan adolescents. The study of Mostafaei, Aminpoor and Mohammadkhani (2012)[30] also proved that adolescents who have low life satisfaction will experience negative emotions such as anxiety and depression.

Thus, researchers can conclude that parents play an important role in shaping adolescents' life satisfaction which contributes to their mental health. High life satisfaction also determines a adolescents to have positive mental health and avoid psychological and emotional disorders such as depression, anxiety and stress. In the context of this study, the researcher is of the opinion that aspects of life satisfaction need to be looked at in depth on teenagers,

especially adolescents whose parents have died so that their mental health is preserved.

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