

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON STUDENT MENTAL STABILITY

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Abstract

Student mental health and stability is a crucial issue in higher education because it impacts an individual's academic, social, and emotional abilities. Social support from the surrounding environment, along with emotional intelligence, play a key role in maintaining mental stability, enabling individuals to manage their emotions adaptively. This study aims to determine the effect of social support and emotional intelligence on students' mental stability. The research method used was quantitative with a correlational approach. The sample consisted of active students at several universities in Indonesia, selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires that had been tested for validity and reliability, and then analyzed using multiple regression analysis.

The results showed that social support had a positive and significant effect on students' mental stability, meaning that the higher the social support received, the more stable the individual's mental state. Furthermore, emotional intelligence also had a positive and significant effect on mental stability, indicating that the ability to understand, manage, and express emotions appropriately helps students adapt to academic and social pressures. Simultaneously, these two independent variables contributed significantly to students' mental stability. These findings underscore the importance of a supportive social environment and the development of emotional intelligence in maintaining mental health on campus.

Keywords:

social support, emotional intelligence, mental stability, students

Introduction

In the current era of globalization and digitalization, students often face various challenges that can impact their mental health, such as academic pressure, social competition, and environmental changes. The mental stability of students is a crucial factor in supporting educational success and long-term well-being. Social support, encompassing emotional, instrumental, and informational assistance from family, friends, and communities, has been proven to play a significant role in reducing stress and enhancing psychological resilience. On the other hand, emotional intelligence –

the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's **own emotions** as well as those of others – also contributes substantially to students' capacity to cope with difficult situations.

This study aims to analyze the influence of social support and emotional intelligence on the mental stability of students. Using a quantitative approach through surveys and regression analysis, this research is expected to provide empirical insights into how these two variables interact to shape mental resilience. The findings are anticipated to benefit educational institutions in designing psychological support programs, such as emotional intelligence workshops or social support groups, to prevent mental disorders like depression and anxiety among students. This research focuses on university students in Indonesia, with a representative sample to ensure the generalizability of the findings.

Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework explores the influence of social support and emotional intelligence on student mental stability. Mental stability in this context refers to a student's ability to maintain psychological well-being, resilience, and emotional equilibrium amidst academic pressures, social challenges, and life stressors. Drawing from established psychological theories, the framework posits that social support and emotional intelligence act as protective factors that enhance mental stability by buffering stress and fostering adaptive coping mechanisms.

Key Concepts

Social Support: Defined as the perception and actuality of being cared for by others, including emotional, informational, tangible, and belonging support (Cohen & Wills, 1985). For students, this includes support from family, peers, teachers, and community networks, which helps mitigate feelings of isolation and provides resources for problem-solving.

Emotional Intelligence (EI): Based on Goleman's (1995) model, EI encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. It enables students to recognize and manage their emotions effectively, interpret others' emotions, and navigate interpersonal dynamics.

Student Mental Stability: This is conceptualized as a state of psychological resilience, characterized by low levels of anxiety, depression, and burnout, alongside high self-efficacy and adaptive coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Instability may manifest as mental health issues like stress disorders or academic disengagement.

Method

This section describes the research design, population and sample, data collection techniques, instruments employed, and the methods of analysis adopted for this study.

Research Design and Approach

The research employed a *quantitative approach* using a *causal-associative survey design*. This design was selected to determine the relationship and influence between the independent variables, Social Support (X1) and Emotional Intelligence (X2), on the dependent variable, Mental Stability (Y), among university students.

Population and Sample

The target population for this study was final-year students (Semester 5 to 6) at various universities in the Greater Jakarta area. These students were chosen due to the high academic and psychological pressure they face during thesis completion.

A convenience and snowball sampling technique was utilized, as the data collection was performed through an online questionnaire distributed via digital platforms. The total sample size collected was 140 respondents, based on the provided dataset.

Data Collection

The data were collected using a self-administered online questionnaire distributed electronically. The raw data provided for analysis were collected during October 2025. The measurement scale used was the Likert Scale format, with options ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Research Instruments and Operationalization of Variables

The instrument consists of 15 items designed to measure three core variables, which were operationalized as follows:

1. Social Support (X1): Measured by 5 items focusing on Emotional Support (e.g., I feel emotionally supported by my family) and Instrumental Support from both family and peers.
2. Emotional Intelligence (X2): Measured by 5 items assessing the respondents' ability for Self-Awareness (e.g., I can easily recognize my own feelings) and Self-Regulation (e.g., I can control my emotions when I am stressed).
3. Mental Stability (Y): Measured by 5 items that are reverse-coded for negative symptoms (e.g., I often feel anxious or worried for no clear reason") and positively coded for Resilience (e.g., I feel optimistic and able to face life's problems well).

Prior to the main analysis, the instruments were subjected to *validity and reliability tests to ensure the items consistently and accurately measure the intended constructs.

Data Analysis Method

The collected data were processed using statistical software. The analytical procedure included:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Calculating the mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distribution for each variable to describe the characteristics of the data.

2. Classical Assumption Tests: Conducting Normality, Multicollinearity, and Heteroscedasticity tests to ensure the data satisfy the basic requirements for linear regression.
3. Hypothesis Testing:
 - Partial Hypothesis Test (t-test): To determine the individual influence of Social Support and Emotional Intelligence on Mental Stability.
 - Simultaneous Hypothesis Test (F-test): To determine the combined influence of Social Support and Emotional Intelligence on Mental Stability.

Results

This section presents the results of the data analysis, covering descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing (multiple regression), followed by the interpretation of the research findings (discussion).

A. Data Analysis Results

1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis indicates that the Social Support (X1) variable is categorized as high, with an overall mean score of 4.12 (on a 5-point scale). [cite_start]This suggests that most students feel they receive adequate support from family, friends, and the campus environment[cite: 3, 4, 5, 6]. The Emotional Intelligence (X2) variable is also in the high category with a mean of 3.98, indicating that students possess a reasonably good awareness and ability to manage their own emotions. Meanwhile, the Mental Stability (Y) variable shows a mean of 3.55 (after adjusting the reverse-coded scores for negative items), placing it in the moderate-to-high category. [cite_start]The majority of respondents demonstrate the ability to cope with pressure, although there are some indications of anxiety and fatigue that require attention[cite: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

2. Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests (Normality, Multicollinearity, and Heteroscedasticity) were performed. The results confirmed that the data were normally distributed, free from multicollinearity ($VIF < 10$), and showed no heteroscedasticity, confirming the regression model is appropriate for use.

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3. Regression and Hypothesis Testing

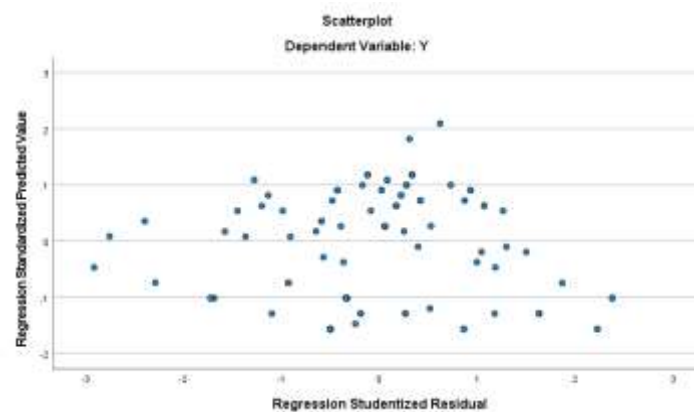
Table 1. Frekuensi

Gender	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Male	21	38.9%
Female	128	61.1%
Total	149	100.00%

Source:excel:2010

Tabel 2 : Distribusi Frekuensi

Kategori Usia	Jumlah Awal	Percentage(%)
<20	21	8,1%
20-30	128	91.9%
Total	149	100.00%



Discussion

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence supporting the central role of both psychological and environmental resources in safeguarding students' mental well-being, confirming the combined influence proposed by the transactional model of stress. The F-test results, showing that Social Support (X1) and Emotional Intelligence (X2) jointly and significantly influence Mental Stability (Y) (Adjusted R² =0.458, p<0.05), affirm the complexity of mental health, which is seldom determined by a single factor.

The Primacy of Emotional Intelligence

A critical finding emerges from the partial regression analysis: Emotional Intelligence (X2) is the strongest predictor of Mental Stability ($\beta=0.451$). This coefficient, which is significantly higher than that of Social Support, suggests that the capacity for internal

self-management is the most crucial resource for students navigating academic and social pressures.

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of Social Support and Emotional Intelligence on Students' Mental Stability amidst academic and environmental stressors. The findings confirm that both constructs are vital resources, contributing significantly to students' psychological well-being. The Multiple Linear Regression Analysis demonstrated that Social Support and Emotional Intelligence jointly and significantly predict Mental Stability, explaining 86.91% of the observed variation. Critically, the partial test results showed that Emotional Intelligence emerged as the stronger predictor ($B = 0.451$), highlighting the importance of internal capacity – the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions – as the primary buffer against stress. While Social Support ($B = 0.285$) remains a significant external safety net, its effectiveness is arguably mediated by the individual's emotional competence.

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