The Relationship Between Social Support and Self-Acceptance with Meaning of Life in Deaf Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Data from several sources, both international and national, state that suicides have occurred frequently in the last 5 years. The cause of many of these suicides is the low meaning of life. Circulating cases state that individuals with adolescence to late adolescence are often victims and perpetrators of suicide due to their low meaning of life. However, there have not been many studies that explain the meaningfulness of life there are disabilities. This study aims to determine the relationship between social support and self-acceptance with meaning of life in deaf adolescents. This study uses a quantitative method of correlation method. The sample amounted to 39 high school students at SMALB "X" in Surabaya. The data collection method uses a social support scale, self-acceptance scale, and meaning of life scale which are distributed conventionally. The results of the research on the simultaneous correlation showed a significant relationship between variables. In the partial correlation, there is a positive correlation or relationship between the social support variable and the meaning of life variable. In the partial correlation, there is a correlation or positive relationship between the self-acceptance variable and the meaning of life variable. The conclusion that can be presented based on the results of the study is that there is a relationship between social support and self-acceptance with the meaning of life in deaf adolescent.

Keywords: Social Support, Self-Acceptance, Meaning of Life, Deaf Adolescents

INTRODUCTION

Meaningfulness of life is an important aspect of individual development. Meaningfulness of life refers to the extent to which individuals feel that their lives have purpose, direction, and significant value (Steger et al., 2006). Meaningfulness of life is one of the important aspects in a person's psychological well-being. According to Frankl (1984), meaningfulness of life helps individuals find purpose and value in their lives, even in the midst of challenges. This factor is crucial because low meaning in life can have a negative impact on mental health and well-being, such as an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and deviant behaviour (Park, 2019). The low meaningfulness of life among Indonesian adolescents has become a serious concern in several recent studies. One indicator is the prevalence of self-injury behaviour among adolescents.

Around 45% of young Indonesians have intentionally self-harmed. In addition, data from the National Police's National Center shows that the most suicides were between 26 and 45 years old, with 263 cases. However, the number of suicide perpetrators aged less than 17 years is more than those aged 17 to 25 years (Banyumas, 2024). Self-injury behaviour is often related to feelings of emptiness, depression, and lack of meaning in life. Research conducted by Murni Rusdiana (2021) in Semarang found that adolescents with self-injury behaviour tend to have low levels of meaning in life. A survey in 2024 by the Walton Family Foundation and Gallup reported that 38% of individuals aged 12 to 26 had been diagnosed with anxiety or depression, with higher rates associated with excessive social media use. This study suggests that a lack of meaning in life exacerbates these mental health issues (Brooks, 2024). In a study by Boreham & Schutte (2023) found that a greater sense of purpose in life was significantly associated with lower levels of depression and anxiety among adolescents, emphasizing the protective role of meaning in life for mental well-being.

Among deaf adolescents, meaning in life is a very important aspect because it can give them the motivation to adapt to the limitations they face. People with disabilities in Indonesia are receiving increasing attention, marked by the identification and introduction of various policies to support their development. From the results of the national socio-economic survey (susenas) in 2018, it is known that there are 14.2% of the Indonesian population as persons with disabilities. Precisely 30.38 million people (Ansori, 2020). However, reality shows that deaf adolescents often face challenges in finding meaning in life. The expectation that every adolescent has equal access to building meaning in life is not fully achieved, mainly due to communication barriers, social stigma, and limited environmental support.

Meaning in life is influenced by various factors, including social support, self-acceptance, spiritual values, and interpersonal relationships (Stenger, 2012). In this context, social support and self-acceptance are the focus of research because of their significant role in building meaning in life, especially in deaf adolescents. The experience of being Deaf is more than just the inability to hear, it involves a complex interplay of identity, culture, and social dynamics. Deaf individuals navigate two worlds: the Deaf community, which is characterized by its own language and cultural norms, and the hearing world, which often operates under different assumptions and expectations. This duality can create unique challenges, especially for deaf students who are at a critical stage of development. Social support is essential for psychological resilience and well-being. Research shows that individuals with strong support networks experience lower stress levels, better mental health, and greater life satisfaction (Cohen & Wills, 1985). For deaf students, social support can come in many forms, including emotional support from family, relationships with peers, guidance from educators, and involvement in community organizations. However, barriers such as communication challenges and community stigma can limit their access to these networks.

Social support refers to an individual's perception of the availability of help and care from others, including family, friends, and community (Livneh & Antonak, 1990). In deaf adolescents, strong social support can help them deal with social stigma and build self-confidence. According to Ryff and Keyes (1995), high self-acceptance allows individuals to value themselves and feel satisfied with their lives. In deaf adolescents, self-acceptance helps them overcome feelings of inferiority that often arise due to social stigma and communication barriers, meaning that high self-acceptance in adolescents with disabilities contributes to increased meaning in life.

This positive self-acceptance may influence their engagement with peers and their willingness to seek support. In addition, recent research suggests that self-acceptance mediates the relationship between social support and mental health outcomes. For example, a study by Schnell et al. (2022) highlighted that self-acceptance serves as a buffer against the negative effects of low social support on well-being, indicating that cultivating self-acceptance can increase resilience in deaf students. Life Meaning as a Psychological Construct Life meaning is a fundamental psychological concept that influences an individual's motivation and overall outlook. For deaf students, a strong sense of meaning can protect them from psychological distress. Research by Minahasa (2023) shows that individuals who find their lives meaningful report higher levels of happiness and lower levels of anxiety.

The researcher conducted a discussion with the principal, vice principal, and high school teachers at SMALB "X" Surabaya. The data obtained showed that some high school students showed passive behaviour, lack of enthusiasm, and lack of motivation to participate in various school activities. This happens because deaf students do not have many close friends at school or outside of school. Parents also do not ask much about how deaf students are doing at school, because for parents, the most important thing is that their children can go to school. In addition, the environment outside of school is often less supportive of deaf students. Teenagers entering high school often feel isolated because the environment outside of school does not understand their needs, especially in terms of communication, which makes these deaf students feel unwelcome. Teachers also explained that many students avoid assignments. Teachers also explained that they receive many complaints from students explaining that students feel uncared for by others. This is because the other people in question are people who are less able to understand that sign so that communication is not channel properly. The school has tried to provide facilities that embrace deaf students to care and support each other. In addition, some

students come from family environments with high levels of stress, such as economic problems, which causes them to be more vulnerable.

The dynamics between social support, self-acceptance and meaningfulness of life show a mutually influencing relationship. Adequate social support can increase self-acceptance by providing a sense of acceptance and appreciation by the environment. Conversely, high self-acceptance can strengthen an individual's ability to build positive social relationships. The combination of these two factors contributes significantly to increased meaningfulness of life. Social support and self-acceptance have a positive correlation with meaning of life in adolescents with special needs, including the deaf. Meaningfulness of life is an important aspect of individual psychological well-being, including in deaf students. Deaf students often face significant challenges in daily life, such as communication limitations, social stigma, and alienation from the social environment. In Indonesia, deaf students are also faced with limited access to adequate inclusive education and often suboptimal social support. Deaf students, as a group with special needs, face various barriers that affect their quality of life. These include communication limitations, social stigma, lack of social support, and limited access to inclusive education.

Thus, this study aims to explore the relationship between social support, self-acceptance, and meaningfulness of life in deaf adolescents. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more effective interventions to improve meaning in life in this group, as well as enrich the literature on factors that influence meaning in life among adolescents with disabilities. This research is important to provide a deeper understanding of how social support and self-acceptance affect the meaning of life in deaf adolescents. Based on previous studies, such as research by Livneh & Antonak (1990) and Ryff (1989), it is known that social support and self-acceptance have a significant relationship with individual psychological well-being. The study by Park et al (2019) also showed that interventions that increase social support and self-acceptance can improve the quality of life of individuals with disabilities.

Research Objective

The objectives of the research carried out are:

1. To find out how the relationship between social support and self-acceptance with meaningfulness of life in deaf students

2. To find out how the relationship between social support and meaning of life in deaf students

3. To find out how the relationship between self-acceptance and meaning of life in deaf students

LITERATURE REVIEW

Meaningfulness of Life

According to Steger (2009) the meaningfulness of life is a real life experience that differs from one person to another, if successfully found, it will make one's life meaningful which brings up feelings of happiness. The function of meaning in life is divided into three. The first function is to help a person recognize and discuss signs and patterns in the environment. The second function is for communication because a person actively uses meaning to share information and coordinate their actions. The third function is for self-control in one's behaviour and influence to consider possibilities that refer to culture, and long-term thinking with the aim of helping guide their actions, make decisions, and manage their emotions

Meaningfulness can be achieved by individuals if they are able to make maximum effort and responsibility, with a firm attitude towards circumstances that cannot be avoided, then accept everything that happens with full awareness. According to Steger (2009) explains that there are 2 aspects that are measured, including:

The Presence of Meaning

This aspect measures the extent to which a person feels that his or her life is meaningful, has purpose, and direction. It reflects a person's subjective experience of the existence of meaning in their life

The Search for Meaning

This aspect measures the extent to which a person actively seeks, explores, or attempts to find meaning or purpose in his or her life. It shows a person's motivation to understand or create meaning in their life.

Social Support

Zimet (1988) states that perceived social support is a perception that individuals have regarding the adequacy or fulfillment of support from family such as father and mother, friends such as friends, and significant others such as lecturers and partners in their lives. With social support provided, it can show interpersonal relationships that protect individuals against the consequences of stress.

The social support received can make individuals feel calm, cared for, foster self-confidence, and loved. Zimet states that there are three dimensions of social support in the form of perceived social support, including:

Family

The family dimension explains individual perceptions related to the fulfillment of providing social support from families such as parents, siblings, and younger siblings

Friends

The friend dimension explains the individual's perception of the fulfillment of social support obtained from peers, friends, or playmates.

Significant Others

The significant others dimension explains individuals' perceptions regarding the fulfillment of social support obtained from people who are considered special such as teachers, spouses, lecturers, or other significant people in the individual's life.
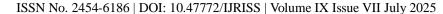
Self-Acceptance (Size 10 & Bold & Italic)

Self-acceptance also includes the ability to accept physical or mental limitations without feeling inferior, and to integrate these limitations as part of one's identity. For individuals with disabilities, self-acceptance involves a change in value system that allows them to place more emphasis on non-physical abilities and continue to develop without feeling a loss of self-esteem. This study uses the theory of Livneh & Antonak (1990) which explains self-acceptance as the process of individuals accepting their physical limitations without feeling a loss of self-esteem or personal value.

Self-acceptance can be defined as an attitude of seeing oneself as it is and treating it well and continuing to work on its capabilities. The theory of Livneh & Antonak (1990) explains 6 aspects of self-acceptance that individuals have, including:

Social Stigma

This aspect explains the individual's ability to protect himself from society's judgment such as negative comments from society.

Enlargement

It describes an individual's sense of adequacy, competence, and ability to see the positive aspects of his or her life

Asset Value

This aspect describes a sense of self-esteem, such as the perception of self-worth in living a quality life

Containment of Disability Effect

This aspect explains the individual's ability to suppress or manage the negative impact of the weaknesses that the individual has.

Family Support

This aspect describes the level of support and motivation provided by family members to individuals

Body Acceptance

This aspect explains the individual's readiness to accept physical conditions including appreciating the appearance that the individual has

Correlation	t	Sig
Social support and meaning of life	0,208	0,836

METHOD

This research is correlational-quantitative research, whose data is quantified in the form of numbers and then processed with statistical calculations to determine the relationship between the variables. Correlational research aims to

determine the correlation of variations in factors with variations in one or more other factors based on the correlation coefficient. The intended factors are referred to as research variables, which affect the symptoms under study. The population of this study is high school students who are in the Karya Mulya Special School for the Deaf Foundation, total 39 students. But based on consideration from the school. Sampling must be done in such a way as to obtain a sample that really works. The sampling technique used in this research is non-probability sampling, namely purposive sampling. Purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique with certain considerations. The sample used is the entire sample of the population, but based on considerations with the school, this research gets 39 students as the sample of this study

RESULT

The results of this study are the results of hypothesis testing conducted using multiple linear regression analysis using the SPSS 26 Series Program IMB for Windows.

First Hypothesis:

The results of multiple regression analysis obtained a Significant F Change value = 0.00 <0.005, meaning these results indicate that there is a significant relationship. The level of closeness or degree of relationship owned can be seen by the value of R = 0.769, meaning that the level of closeness or degree of relationship owned is strong. Based on these data values, it can be concluded that there is a strong significant relationship between social support and self-acceptance with meaning of life in deaf adolescents. This means that the first hypothesis is accepted

Variable	R	Sig. F Change
Social Support and Self-Acceptance with Meaningfulness of Life	0,769	0,000

Second Hypothesis:

According to the results of data analysis, the social support variable obtained the coefficient t = 0.208 with p = 0.836 (p> 0.05). This means that social support has a positive relationship with meaningfulness of life, but does not have a significant relationship. This means that the second hypothesis is rejected.

Third Hypothesis:

According to the results of data analysis, the self-acceptance variable obtained the coefficient t = 6.783 with p = 0.000 (p < 0.05). This means that self-acceptance has a significant positive relationship with meaningfulness of life. This means that the third hypothesis is accepted

Correlation	t	Sig
Social support and meaning of life	6,783	0,000

Regression Line Equation:

The price of β_0 and $\beta_1 X_1$; $\beta_2 X_2$ as part of the Regression Line Equation

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 = 4{,}605 + 0{,}026 X_1 + 0{,}419 X_2$$

Based on the previous formula, it can be concluded as follows:

1. If there is no social support and self-acceptance, then meaningfulness of life = 4.605

2. The regression coefficient of 0.026 indicates that each additional 1 score of Social Support will increase Meaningfulness of Life by 0.026

3. The regression coefficient of 0.419 indicates that each addition of 1 score of Self-Acceptance will increase Meaningfulness of Life by 0.026

Variable	Beta Coefficient
Meaningfulness of Life (Y)	4,605
Social Support (X1)	0,026
Self-Acceptance (X2)	0.419

R^2 and Effective Contribution of Each Variable

According to the results of the previous calculation, it can be seen that the effective contribution (SE) of the social support variable (X1) to the meaningfulness of life (Y) is 0.6%. While the effective contribution (SE) of the self-acceptance variable (X2) to the meaningfulness of life (Y) is 58.4%. Based on the results of the previous data, it can be concluded that the self-acceptance variable

(X2) has a more dominant relationship than the social support variable (X1)

Variable	Regression Coefficient (Beta)	Cross Product	Regression	R^2
Social Support (X1)	0,026	623.231	1575,591	0,591
Self-Acceptance (X2)	0,419	3718.026		

DISCUSSION

This research shows a significant relationship between social support and self-acceptance with meaning of life in deaf adolescents. This relationship shows that the two variables together contribute to the meaning of life, with a strong level of relationship closeness. This finding is in line with previous research that emphasizes the importance of social support and self-acceptance in improving the quality of life of individuals, especially in groups with special needs. This is in accordance with Hayyu's research (2024) which explains that meaning of life has a significant relationship to social support in deaf people. However, this study only measures the relationship with 1 independent variable, namely social support. This research is also in line with research conducted by Mony (2021) which also explains that meaning of life has a significant relationship to social support for individuals with disabilities. However, both studies only discuss one factor. Compared to Supradewi et. al research (2019) which explores two factors or variables that affect the meaningfulness of life, namely social support and Ikhlas. This study explains the relationship using simultaneous correlation but uses the Ikhlas variable as a partial correlation. This proves that the results of this study are quite important because not many researchers have discussed the simultaneous correlation between social support and self-acceptance with the meaningfulness of life in the deaf.

However, further analysis showed that social support had a positive but insignificant relationship with meaning in life. This indicates that although social support is important, its contribution to the meaning of life in deaf adolescents is relatively small. These results differ from research on self-acceptance with meaning of life by Nafi (2020) which explains the significant relationship between social support and meaning of life. The difference is that this research was conducted on adolescents with deaf disabilities, while Nafi's research (2020) was conducted on adult prisoners. Another study conducted by Mony (2021) also stated that there was a significant relationship between social support and meaningfulness of life for deaf people in the deaf community. This community context is the difference between Mony's research and the research that has been done. Mony examined in the context of the Indonesian deaf unity community, where the community has facilities and associations that are in accordance with the needs of the deaf, while the research that has been done is carried out on school students, where there is a possibility that the facilities provided are not in accordance with the needs of students so that the results obtained are different from previous studies. This can be used as input to special schools to be able to provide facilities that suit the needs of deaf students. In the context of deaf adolescents, other factors such as self-acceptance seem to have a more dominant role than social support.

Self-acceptance showed a positive significant relationship with meaning of life. This confirms that self-acceptance is the main factor influencing the meaningfulness of life in deaf adolescents. This finding is supported by Deci and Ryan (2020) in self-determination theory, which states that self-acceptance is key in achieving psychological well-being and meaningfulness of life. Deaf adolescents who are able to accept themselves tend to be more able to find meaning in life despite physical limitations. Another study conducted by Evitasari (2020) stated that self-acceptance has a significant relationship with meaningfulness of life. The study explains the process of deaf self-acceptance through three phases, namely the initial phase, the conflict phase, and the acceptance phase. When these three phases are fulfilled, individuals with deaf disabilities have a better meaning of life. This answers why in the research that has been done, the contribution of self-acceptance is greater than social support to the meaning of life in deaf adolescents. Another study conducted by Sofyanty (2023) examined the relationship between self-acceptance and meaning of life in individuals with blind disabilities. With the same respondents, but different characteristics from the research that has been done, the results found that self-acceptance has a significant relationship to the meaning of life, especially in individuals with disabilities.

In this perspective, self-acceptance can be considered a dynamic and ongoing process. Deaf adolescents need to be given the opportunity to continuously learn and develop in understanding themselves. This can be done through programs that not only focus on psychological aspects, but also include the development of practical skills relevant to their daily lives. Research by Zhou & Xu (2018) also supports the importance of self-acceptance as a key predictor of meaning in life, especially in individuals facing significant life challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

This research shows the importance of self-acceptance in improving the meaningfulness of life of deaf adolescents. Nevertheless, social support still needs to be considered as a supporting factor that can strengthen self-acceptance and help deaf adolescents live a more meaningful life. Self-acceptance and social support can work together to support deaf adolescents' meaningfulness of life.

Implications

Based on the conclusions and the previous discussion, there are suggestions that can be given or proposed, including:

For Adolescents

Adolescents are hopefully to be able to increase self-acceptance by starting not to care about negative stigma from the environment, starting to see the potential of themselves that can be done despite having limitations by finding hobbies, and starting to receive input from the environment that supports the development of subjects such as the school currently occupied.

For School

Schools are hopefully able to provide education and facilities for deaf friends to bring out their potential and strengths as a form of good self-acceptance

For Other Researchers

The next researcher is hopefully able to examine other factors of the meaningfulness of life for deaf adolescents so that it can complement the existing data in this study. In addition, researchers are expected to be able to sign language in accordance with the basis used in deaf subjects if they want to research on deafness.

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