The Correlation Between Social Support And Self-Esteem Among Final-Year Students At Bhakti Husada University Indonesia

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A B S T R A C T

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that low self-esteem is a prevalent mental health issue worldwide, affecting an estimated 121 million people, including 5.8% of men and 9.5% of women, with many cases occurring among individuals in their productive years—university students included. The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between social support and self-esteem among final-year nursing students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia. This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational descriptive method and a cross-sectional design. The population consisted of 178 final-year nursing students working on their theses in 2022, from which a sample of 113 was selected through proportionate stratified random sampling. The research instruments included a social support questionnaire and a self-esteem questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using the Spearman's Rank correlation test. The bivariate analysis yielded a p-value of 0.000 and a correlation coefficient (rho) of 0.547, indicating a significant relationship between social support and self-esteem among final-year students. The findings of this study provide practical implications, particularly for students, educators, and academic institutions, by emphasizing the importance of strengthening social support systems to enhance students' self-esteem, improve coping abilities, and support their academic completion. It is hoped that students will be able to build greater self-confidence, become more open, and develop supportive relationships with family, friends, and academic advisors while facing the challenges of completing their theses.

1. Introduction

University students are required to complete their academic studies to obtain a bachelor's degree. One of the most demanding phases in this process is the completion of a thesis, which represents the final requirement before graduation [1]. According to data from Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), the number of university students in Indonesia reached 8.95 million in 2021, with approximately 871,000 students enrolled in West Java. Institutional data from Bhakti Husada University Indonesia indicated that in 2022 there were 178 final-year nursing students actively working on their theses [2].

The thesis completion period often presents various challenges for students, including academic pressure, time constraints, and psychological burdens. These challenges may lead to stress, anxiety, decreased motivation, feelings of inadequacy, and reduced self-confidence [3]. In severe cases, such conditions may result in delays in graduation or even thesis abandonment [4], [5], [6]. Such psychological responses are frequently associated with low self-esteem.

The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies low self-esteem as a significant global mental health concern, affecting an estimated 121 million individuals

worldwide, including 5.8% of men and 9.5% of women. Alarmingly, only about 30% of affected individuals receive appropriate treatment, despite the availability of effective interventions. Most cases occur among individuals of productive age, including university students, and approximately 60% of suicide cases have been associated with low self-esteem [3].

Self-esteem is shaped by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include gender, intelligence, and physical condition, while external factors involve the social environment, educational setting, and family support. Among these, the social environment plays a crucial role, as self-esteem develops through interpersonal interactions, recognition, acceptance, and social evaluation [4].

Social support is particularly important for final-year students facing the pressures of thesis completion. Support from family, peers, and academic advisors can foster confidence, emotional stability, and resilience [5]. Positive interpersonal interactions tend to enhance self-esteem, whereas negative or unsupportive environments may contribute to lower self-esteem. Previous studies have consistently shown that higher levels of perceived social support are positively associated with higher self-esteem [6]. However, empirical evidence focusing on final-year nursing students in the Indonesian context remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between social support and self-esteem among final-year nursing students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia.

2. Research Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design. Descriptive research aims to systematically analyze and present data in order to describe the characteristics of a population accurately [7]. A cross-sectional design was used, in which the independent and dependent variables were measured simultaneously at a single point in time without follow-up [8].

The study was conducted among final-year nursing students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia. The population consisted of 178 students who were actively completing their theses in 2022. A sample of 113 students was selected using proportionate stratified random sampling.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires measuring social support and self-esteem. Prior to data collection, the instruments were tested for validity and reliability. Item validity testing was conducted, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure the consistency and appropriateness of the measurement tools.

Univariate analysis was performed using frequency distribution to describe the characteristics of

respondents and research variables. Bivariate analysis was conducted using Spearman's Rank correlation test to examine the relationship between social support and self-esteem among final-year students. Figure 1. research flowchart showing the sequence of research stages from preparation to conclusion.
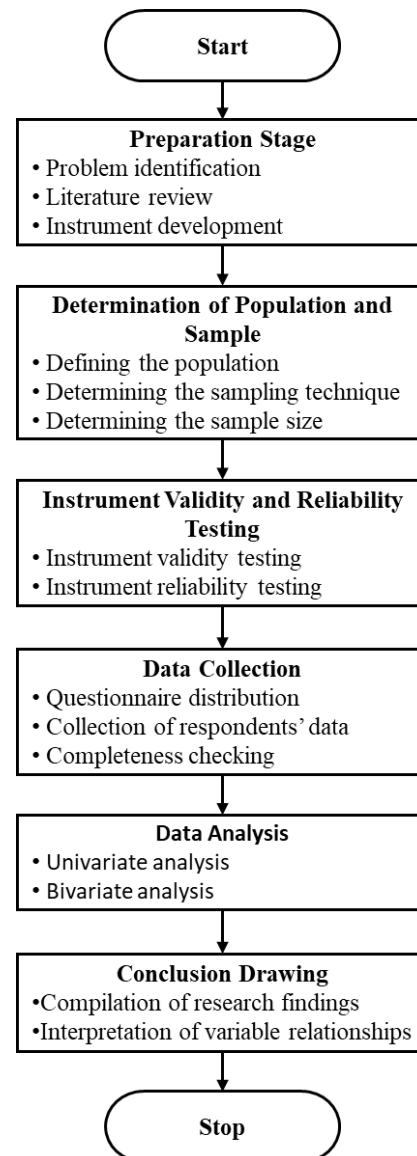

Figure 1. Flowchart of the Research Process

3. Result and Discussion

This section reports the findings of the study, including the distribution of social support and self-esteem levels and the results of the correlation analysis examining their relationship among final-year nursing students.

3.1. Univariate Analysis

This analysis was conducted to determine the frequency distribution of the research variables.

3.1.1. Distribution of Social Support Levels

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Social Support among Final-Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia (n = 113)

Social Support	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	51.0	45.1
Moderate	47.0	41.6
Low	15.0	13.3
Total	113.0	100.0

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents reported a high level of social support, with 51 students (45.1%) classified in this category. A total of 47 respondents (41.6%) experienced moderate social support, while 15 respondents (13.3%) reported low levels of social support.

3.1.2. Distribution of Self-Esteem Levels

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Self-Esteem among Final-Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia (n = 113)

Self-Esteem	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	24.0	21.2
Moderate	76.0	67.3
Low	13.0	11.5
Total	113.0	100.0

As shown in Table 2, most respondents demonstrated a moderate level of self-esteem, accounting for 76 students (67.3%). In contrast, 24 respondents (21.2%) exhibited high self-esteem, and 13 respondents (11.5%) were categorized as having low self-esteem.

3.2. Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis was conducted to assess the significance of the relationship between social support and self-esteem among final-year students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia. The association between variables was analyzed using Spearman's Rank correlation test.

Table 3. Relationship Between Social Support and Self-Esteem among Final-Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia (n = 113)

Social Support	High Self-Esteem (n/%)	Moderate Self-Esteem (n/%)	Low Self-Esteem (n/%)	Total (n/%)	p-Value (ρ)
High	21 (41.2%)	28 (54.9%)	2 (3.9%)	51 (100%)	
Moderate	3 (6.4%)	43 (91.5%)	1 (2.1%)	47 (100%)	0.000 (0.547)
Low	0 (0.0%)	5 (33.3%)	10 (66.7%)	15 (100%)	
Total	24 (21.2%)	76 (67.3%)	13 (11.5%)	113 (100%)	

As shown in Table 3, of the 51 respondents who reported high levels of social support, the majority demonstrated moderate self-esteem (28 respondents, 54.9%), while 21 respondents (41.2%) exhibited high self-esteem. Among the 47 respondents with moderate social support, most participants (43 respondents, 91.5%) were categorized as having moderate self-esteem. In contrast, among the 15 respondents who reported low social support, the majority (10 respondents, 66.7%) exhibited low self-esteem.

The results of Spearman's Rank correlation test indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between social support and self-esteem ($\rho = 0.547$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that higher levels of social support are associated with higher levels of self-esteem among final-year students.

3.3. Discussion

3.3.1. Overview of Social Support among Final-Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia

The results of this study indicate that among the 113 final-year nursing students surveyed, a considerable proportion, namely 51 students (45.1%), reported experiencing a high level of social support. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by [9], which demonstrated that the majority of final-year students in Surabaya also received high social support, with 124 respondents (60.8%) categorized in the high-support group. These consistent findings across different academic settings suggest that, despite the substantial academic pressures associated with the final year of study, many students are still able to access meaningful support from their social environments.

However, the results also show that 15 respondents reported low levels of social support. This condition may be primarily attributed to limited instrumental support received from peers. Instrumental support, such as assistance in finding reference materials, sharing academic resources, or collaborating during the thesis writing process, is particularly important for final year students. Nevertheless, students at this stage are often highly focused on completing their own academic requirements, which may reduce their availability and willingness to provide assistance to others. This tendency toward academic individualism can lead to decreased peer interaction and weakened mutual support.

In addition to limited instrumental support, several respondents also experienced insufficient emotional support, particularly from parents. Emotional support, including encouragement, empathy, validation, and attentive listening, plays a crucial role in maintaining motivation and psychological well being. For some students, the lack of parental emotional support may be related to living apart from their families due to dormitory residence, migration for educational purposes, or financial constraints. Physical distance can reduce the frequency and quality of communication, potentially diminishing feelings of connectedness and emotional security. Consequently, students may experience increased academic stress, reduced motivation, and greater difficulty coping with the demands of thesis completion.

These findings are in line with the arguments proposed by [10] and [11], who suggested that the ability to perceive and provide social support is influenced by age related developmental factors. Younger individuals tend to be more self oriented and may have limited awareness of others emotional and practical needs. In competitive academic environments, this characteristic may further contribute to reduced peer support. Moreover, [12] emphasized that social support functions not only as assistance but also as constructive feedback that enhances self evaluation. Meaningful social support, such as verbal encouragement, guidance, and positive affirmation, can strengthen confidence, sustain motivation, and help students manage academic challenges more effectively.

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3.3.2. Overview of Self Esteem among Final Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of final year students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia exhibited moderate levels of self esteem, with 76 respondents (67.3%) classified within this category. This result aligns with previous research by [12], which similarly found that most students demonstrated moderate self esteem (50 respondents or 70.42%). The consistency of these findings suggests that moderate self esteem is a common characteristic among university students, particularly those approaching graduation and facing academic demands, career uncertainty, and increased responsibilities.

The predominance of moderate self esteem may be influenced by students perceived sense of significance, namely the extent to which they feel valued, recognized, and treated positively by others. Many respondents appeared to receive sufficient attention, acceptance, and emotional support from family members, peers, and their social environments. This interpretation is consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by [13], which emphasizes that self esteem is strongly shaped by interactions with significant others who provide emotional security, validation, and affirmation.ho emphasize that self-esteem is strongly shaped by the presence of "significant others," or individuals who provide emotional security, validation, and affirmation in a person's life.

Furthermore, self esteem is closely linked to the level of social support available within an individual environment [14]. Supportive social interactions foster feelings of competence, belonging, and self worth [15].

According to [16], the social environment serves as a key determinant of self esteem, as it encompasses continuous processes of communication, recognition, acceptance, and interpersonal engagement. When individuals perceive themselves as supported and valued, this positive reinforcement contributes to increased self confidence and healthier self esteem [17].

In the context of final year students, support from family, constructive feedback from lecturers, collaboration with peers, and supportive friendships collectively contribute to maintaining self esteem at a moderate level. While this suggests that students generally receive adequate support, it also indicates potential for improvement, particularly in strengthening emotional resilience and self efficacy as students prepare to transition into professional roles.

3.3.3. Relationship Between Social Support and Self-Esteem among Final-Year Students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia

The bivariate analysis using Spearman Rank correlation test revealed a p value of 0.000, which is below the established significance level of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between social support and self esteem. The correlation coefficient of 0.547 reflects a moderate positive correlation, suggesting that higher levels of social support are associated with higher levels of self esteem among final year students. This finding is consistent with previous research [16], which also reported a significant association between these variables, thereby reinforcing the validity of the present results.

The distribution of respondents further illustrates this relationship. Among the 51 respondents with high social support, most exhibited moderate (54.9%) or high (41.2%) self esteem, with only a small proportion (3.9%) demonstrating low self esteem. Similarly, among the 47 respondents with moderate social support, the vast majority (91.5%) demonstrated moderate self esteem.

In contrast, respondents with low social support showed the least favorable outcomes. Of the 15 individuals in this group, 66.7% exhibited low self esteem, and none achieved high self esteem. This finding highlights the critical role of social and environmental reinforcement in the development of self worth.

These findings reveal that most respondents overall fell into the moderate self-esteem category, suggesting that while many students receive adequate emotional and social reinforcement, it may not be strong enough to elevate their confidence to consistently high levels. The researcher observed a pattern in the subgroup with low self-esteem: all individuals with low self-esteem were female [18]. Meanwhile, almost all male respondents demonstrated high self-esteem. This observation aligns

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with previous studies [19], which found that women often perceive themselves as having lower self-worth than men, and may be more likely to experience self-doubt, insecurity, and dependency on external validation. These findings are also supported by [20], who concluded that women generally report lower self-esteem levels than their male counterparts due to a combination of sociocultural expectations, gender norms, and emotional expression patterns.

Based on the overall results, the findings confirm that social support plays a significant role in shaping self esteem among final year students. Strong support from family, peers, and the academic environment contributes to a more positive sense of self, whereas insufficient support is associated with lower self esteem. Nevertheless, self esteem is influenced by multiple factors, including gender, cognitive abilities, and physical conditions, which were not examined in this study. Future research is recommended to explore these factors further in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of self esteem among university student [21].

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the majority of final year students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia experienced high levels of social support and demonstrated moderate levels of self esteem. In addition, a statistically significant relationship was identified between social support and self esteem, indicating that students who receive stronger social support tend to have higher levels of self esteem.

These results highlight the important role of social support in shaping students psychological well being, particularly during the final stage of academic study. It is expected that final year students at Bhakti Husada University Indonesia will be encouraged to strengthen their self confidence, become more open in seeking support, and build positive relationships with their social environment, including family members, peers, and academic supervisors. Supportive interactions of this kind may contribute to improved self esteem, better coping abilities, and overall academic success during the thesis completion process.

From a practical perspective, universities are encouraged to strengthen mentoring programs, peer support initiatives, and student counseling services in order to enhance students perceived social support. Academic advisors and faculty members are also expected to take a more active role in providing emotional encouragement and motivational guidance, which may positively influence students self esteem and academic persistence.

Future research is recommended to include additional variables such as academic stress, coping strategies, family dynamics, and personality traits to provide a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing self esteem among university students. The use of longitudinal research designs is also suggested to examine how social support and self esteem interact over time. Furthermore, comparative studies involving students from multiple universities or different academic disciplines may help improve the generalizability of future findings.

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