

Exploring Recent Life Experiences Among High School Students: Gender and Grade-Level Influences on Psychological and Behavioral Challenges

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Abstract: This study will present the results of testing the current experience instrument of senior high school students who are not contaminated with certain problems. This instrument is a development of the current experience instrument in college students who are not contaminated with certain problems. The instrument consists of 41 statements divided into 8 factors namely social isolation, excessive demands, romantic problems, decisions about the future, loneliness and unpopularity, various disorders and anxiety, social persecution, and academic challenges. This instrument was adopted by the researcher with the aim of being in line with the development of this instrument, namely measuring the extent of physical and mental health disorders to be predicted. This instrument will see how influential gender is on current experiences. Testing was conducted on 48 MA Al-Khoiriyah Gondanglegi students in classes X and XII. The results of the classical assumption test have met the classical assumptions, then proceed to the independent sample T-Test test with the results of the df value of 46 so that the t-table is 2.013 (t-count 2.706) so it can be concluded that gender determines different recent experiences or in other words gender will produce different physical or mental disorders. The test continued with the chi-square test which looked at the relationship between gender and grade level on students' current experiences with a sig value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) so that H1 was accepted or there was a relationship between gender and grade level on students' current experiences or in other words that gender and grade level were related to students' current experiences. It can be concluded that gender and grade level significantly influence and relate to students' current experience.

Keywords: recent life experience, maladaptive behavior, recent behavior, psychological disorders.

▪ INTRODUCTION

High school is an important period in students' lives. At this time they are not only required to excel academically, but also experience various physical, emotional and social changes. This can lead to various disorders that can affect the learning process and overall development. Talking about the disturbances experienced by students is certainly a very important urgency to explore. Various disorders experienced by students are influenced by internal factors and external factors from the students themselves. Guidance and Counseling teachers have the main mandate to help students deal with various problems faced by students. It is important to recognize that each student has different experiences and needs. Therefore, there is no single solution that can address all types of disorders experienced by high school students. Appropriate handling must be done based on the identification of needs, disorders, causes and severity.

The internal factor is the family environment. One of the studies conducted Islami & Fitriyani (2022) about self-acceptance in adolescents who live with single parents. It is found that based on the experience of the child who gets the treatment or care of his

parents can make him disciplined, knowing good and bad norms and good socialization skills. So it can be said that the individual has accepted what he is and does not depend on others, this is due to his experience of getting care from parents. There is comparative research from the above research conducted Dafnaz & Effendy (2020) in adolescents, namely unfulfilled emotional and social needs. His experience in dealing with loneliness is directly proportional to the psychological problems and symptoms of somatic disorders experienced. Next is research by Daulay et al. (2023) which describes family communication patterns in adolescents with risks and disorders of mental health problems. This is an individual experience of getting communication patterns in the family.

Further research was conducted Purnamasari et al. (2023) about factors that influence mental emotional disorders in high school adolescents. The results showed an influence between family factors and peer environmental factors on mental emotional disorders. This is also related to recent experiences experienced by students. Research conducted by Utami (2019) obtained the results that the solution provided must be in accordance with the results of identifying needs, then the teacher or parents take actions such as treatment and others. Various instrument tools to identify needs in students have been carried out by researchers and experts in their respective fields. In developing an instrument for identifying student needs, it must go through a series of research stages and then test the level of validity of the items and the level of confidence in the instrument. In identifying disorders experienced by students, counseling teachers often use one instrument that may not be experienced by the student. So an instrument is needed that will identify all the disorders experienced without mentioning what disorders are experienced.

Research conducted Kohn & Macdonald (1992) developed a Hassles scale that could reflect the physical and mental health disorders it sought to predict. In this case because it wanted to look at the prediction at hand, it was important to develop an instrument that was relatively free from contamination of specific disorders. Students' ability to identify problems, for example due to transition, adaptation, new environment. Kohn et al. (1990) have developed the Inventory of College Students Recent Life Experience (ICSRLE) which consists of 49 items. This inventory has a confidence score of 0.89. This inventory is also significantly related to anxiety in predicting individual psychiatric symptoms. Follow-up research conducted by Osman et al. (1994) which resulted in a confidence score of 0.922 on the ICSRLE instrument.

Research on this instrument was also continued Kohn & Milrose (1993) on senior high school students which includes such as academic developmental challenges, time pressure, romance problems, friendship problems and social mistreatment. It was found that item validity and reliability were consistently good. It was also found that female adolescents experienced more distress than male adolescents, but it was not proven that they felt more stressed. The researcher's adaptation of the IHSSRLE in Indonesian has a higher urgency to predict the current experiences experienced, so as to know the disorders faced and provide suitable interventions for individuals. This inventory can help counseling teachers in assessing the needs of students, especially on a broader and larger scale. The results of this scale can also be taken into consideration in developing Guidance and Counseling service programs at school.

With IHSSRLE, it is expected that counseling teachers do not provide scales that refer only to certain disorders. It could be possible that the answers have been arranged by students and not identified with the whole of what they are facing. The IHSSRLE

instrument will get questions that show the current experience experienced in the past month and the disorder is explicitly mentioned starting from considerable pressure, problems or difficulties (Bodenhorn et al., 2007; Kohn et al., 1990; Osman et al., 1994; Woods et al., 2001). With the IHSSRLE, it is expected that counseling teachers and school stakeholders can provide facilities through guidance and counseling to students who are predicted to experience disorders, teach how to manage disorders, manage disorders and solutions that can reduce these disorders.

▪ **METHOD**

Participants

This study included a sample of 48 students from MA Al-Khoiriyah Gondanglegi, representing grades X and XII. Participants were chosen through random sampling, ensuring every student had an equal chance of being part of the research. While specific exclusion criteria were not detailed, future research could benefit from incorporating a broader range of demographic factors such as socioeconomic status, prior learning experiences, and geographical diversity to achieve more representative data. The sample comprised both male and female students, allowing for an analysis of gender differences in recent life experiences. To promote honesty in responses, all data collection adhered to strict confidentiality protocols.

Research Design and Procedures

A quantitative descriptive research design (Hartono, 2018) was utilized to examine the validity and reliability of the Indonesian version of the Inventory of High School Students' Recent Life Experience (IHSSRLE). This approach was selected to ensure the instrument's effectiveness in assessing students' recent life challenges. The research process began with the translation of the original IHSSRLE instrument, developed in English, into Indonesian. To ensure both linguistic and contextual accuracy, this translation involved collaboration between a linguist and a psychologist. The translated instrument was then refined to better fit the high school context while maintaining the integrity of the original constructs. After finalizing the adaptation, the instrument was administered during regular school hours, with teachers on hand to address any questions or clarify instructions (Rahman, 2020; Zamroni & Hilmia, 2023). Ethical considerations, including informed consent from both students and their guardians, were carefully followed throughout the study.

Instruments

The primary tool used in this research was the Indonesian adaptation of the IHSSRLE, which was derived from the 49-item Inventory of College Students' Recent Life Experiences (ICSRLE). The revised version comprised 41 items that aimed to measure various dimensions of students' recent experiences, such as social isolation, academic pressures, interpersonal challenges, future decision-making, and emotional well-being. A Likert scale was used to capture the frequency or intensity of these experiences. The instrument underwent a thorough validation process, with the validity of each item assessed using Pearson correlation and the overall reliability evaluated through Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.918, indicating a high level of internal consistency and ensuring the instrument's robustness in measuring its intended constructs.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved using SPSS software to evaluate the validity and reliability of the instrument, as well as to investigate relationships between variables. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to determine item validity, with items scoring above the threshold of 0.235 deemed valid. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which returned a high score of 0.918, signifying strong internal consistency. To explore gender differences in recent life experiences, an Independent T-Test was conducted (Subandriyo, 2020). Prior to this, normality tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk) were performed to ensure the data met the T-Test assumptions (Boedijoewono, 2007). Additionally, the study used a Chi-Square test to examine the association between gender and grade level regarding recent life experiences. Results showing a p-value of less than 0.05 were interpreted as statistically significant, highlighting meaningful relationships between these variables. This comprehensive analytical approach ensured a robust examination of the data and supported the study's findings (Sembiring & Tarigan, 2022; Ula Azizah et al., 2021; Wibowo, 2017).

▪ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After going through the procedure for instrument development, the data was distributed to respondents, in this case high school students.

Item Validity and Reliability Test

The validity test was carried out in the SPSS application with the results obtained the value of all items > 0.235 so that it can be said that the items are valid. Furthermore, the reliability test using SPSS obtained the following results:

Table 1. Reliability test

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.918	0.919	41

It can be concluded that the Cronbach's Alpha value is $0.918 > 0.7$ so that it gets a very high trust score.

Classical Assumption Test

The classic assumption test for the pre-requisite independent T-Test is the normality test. The results are as follows:

Table 2. Normality test

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Recent Life	0.077	48	.200*	0.968	48	0.211

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The sig value in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov column is 0.200 and Shapiro-Wilk is $0.211 > 0.05$, so it can be said that the data is normally distributed.

Independent T-Test

Data normality has been met so the Independent T-test can be continued. The results are as follows:

Table 3. Independent samples test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Recent life	Equal variances assumed	0.009	0.924	-2.706	46	0.010	-14.943	5.523	-26.059	-3.827
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.660	38.479	0.011	-14.943	5.617	-26.308	-3.577

From the independent sample T-Test test above, the following results are obtained, 1) the sig value is $0.010 < 0.05$, so it can be said that there is an average difference between the two groups; 2) it is also shown that the sig value in the levene test is $0.924 > 0.05$, then the data used is homogeneous or the same; 3) shown the value of df 46 or T table 2.013 and T count of 2.706, then the value of T table $<$ T count, so it can be concluded that the average difference in male and female gender will produce different recent experiences.

Chi Square Test

Next is the Chi-Square test to see the relationship between the class and gender variables in the data. This test is used to see the relationship between the two data being compared. So that it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between the two data or not. The results are as follows:

Table 4. Chi square test

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.584 ^a	1	0.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	13.191	1	0.000		
Likelihood Ratio	20.951	1	0.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				0.000	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.260	1	0.000		
N of Valid Cases	48				

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.25.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Furthermore, the results of Chi Square testing obtained the following results, 1) it is shown that the asymp sig value is $0.000 < 0.05$, so H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, so there is a relationship between gender and grade level on students' recent experiences; 2) the value of df 1 or chi square table is $3.841 < \text{chi square count } 15.584$, so it can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted or there is a relationship between gender and grade variables on students' recent experiences.

Based on the above research, it can be concluded that there are differences in recent experiences experienced between male and female genders and differences in grade levels will also affect it. The first is about the validity and reliability of the Inventory High School Student Recent Life Experience (IHSSRLE). In testing the validity of the items, the results show that all items are more than 0.235 or it can be said that all items can be said to be valid. Furthermore, the trust score or reliability test obtained a Cronbach Alpha value of $0.918 > 0.7$ with a very high category. Based on this, it can be concluded that IHSSRLE can be continued to be tested on a larger scale using Factor Exploration and Confirmatory Factors so that it can be seen to what extent the items and indicators are related.

Next is the Independent sample T-Test test, which is carried out prerequisite test first, namely data normality. From the results of the independent sample T-test above, it can be said that there are different recent experiences from each gender. This is also in line with research conducted by Kohn & Milrose (1993) who compared the current experiences experienced by male and female students. From these results it can be said that in MA Al-Khoiriyah Gondanglegi Malang there are different current experiences experienced by male and female students. This further confirms that indeed the disturbances that occur between genders are also different starting from internal and external factors of students.

In line with research Fithriyana (2019) which was conducted on 147 students with 83 female students. Of the 147 students, 51 students have affective functions that are fulfilled and 96 students are not fulfilled and are prone to deviance. This is due to gaining experience in the family, namely the affective function of the family ranging from mutual care, mutual respect, mutual respect, mutual bonding and even separation which underlies the happiness of a family. Sometimes families do not realize this function will affect the relationship between family members, for example to children.

Children who do not get a healthy experience in the family will tend to get it from outside such as friends, society, social which may lead to negative things such as promiscuity (Fithriyana, 2019). In the school environment, for example, in line with research conducted by Hidayat & Harahap (2023) about adolescent self-adjustment. This research highlights the differences in experience between children of traditional and modern families that shape adolescents' self-adjustment, the experience in the family becomes an important factor and stronger support in facing the challenges of designing their identity.

It is undeniable that only family and school factors are the major factors that influence the experiences of teenage children. Research conducted by Aziz et al. (2021) resulted that adolescents who experienced behavioral and / or emotional disorders were 23.6% and adolescents who always experienced behavioral and / or emotional disorders were 8.6%. This is due to several factors, so it is necessary to increase the experience of knowledge, training and advocacy about mental health in adolescents in order to prevent behavioral and emotional disorders in adolescents.

In line with research conducted by Ningrum et al. (2022) about raising awareness of mental health disorders in adolescents. This research should be a problem that gets serious attention because it is related to individual mental health. Adolescence is an age when a person is experiencing a process of self-discovery, so it is necessary to have self-control and sensitivity to their psychological condition. This is also an experience of psychological experience. The psychological experiences they experience can be an attempt to predict the psychological disorders that are being faced.

This finding is consistent with adolescent development theory which asserts that each stage of development has unique challenges that individuals must face. In adolescence, students not only experience physical changes, but also complex psychological changes (Darmayanti et al., 2024). Each grade level provides different challenges, such as social adaptation in grade X, academic pressure in grade XI, and anxiety about the future in grade XII. These differences suggest that a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective in supporting student development. A more personalized and contextualized approach is needed to provide appropriate support (Arumsasi et al., 2015; Mariah et al., 2020; Pramesta & Dewi, 2021).

The diverse life experiences of male and female students suggest that gender plays an important role in how they face and cope with challenges. Male students tend to have pressure to demonstrate independence and practical problem-solving skills, while female students face more emotional challenges rooted in gender norms. This suggests that gender-based counseling that is sensitive to emotional and social needs can help students develop balance in coping with these different pressures. The roles of educators, counselors and parents are crucial in creating an environment that supports students' psychological and emotional development. Cooperation between these three parties can ensure that students receive holistic support, which focuses not only on academic aspects but also on emotional well-being. An inclusive guidance program, taking into account gender and grade level, can improve students' readiness to face life's challenges.

▪ CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the Inventory of High School Student Recent Life Experience (IHSSRLE) can be a tool to identify disorders experienced by students through the instrument's predictive results. This instrument has a very high level of validity and reliability with a score of $0.918 > 0.7$. From the results of independent tests and chi square above, it can be concluded that there are different current experiences of male and female students. It was also found that gender and grade level also have a significant relationship with students' current experiences. So that it can be further research to do factor analysis either through Exploratory Factor (EFA) or Confirmatory Factor (CFA) to see the suitability of items and validity between items and indicators in the instrument. IHSSRLE should also be tested by linguists and experts in related fields to be used on a wider scale.

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