



A CASE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF UIN PALOPO STUDENTS

STUDI KASUS TENTANG KISAH ASMARA TERHADAP KESEHATAN MENTAL MAHASISWA UIN PALOPO

Nurpadila^{1*}, Efendi P²

^{1*,2}Universitas Islam Negeri Palopo, Email : 2201030009@uinpalopo.ac.id

*email koresponden: 2201030009@uinpalopo.ac.id

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Abstract

Romantic relationships are one form of interpersonal relationship that can influence the emotional and psychological conditions of university students. Romantic relationships can provide emotional support, comfort, attention, a place to share problems, and motivation. However, problems within romantic relationships, such as lack of communication, dishonesty, betrayal, and lack of family approval, can also become sources of emotional and psychological pressure. This study aims to describe the dynamics of romantic relationships and their impact on the mental health of UIN Palopo students. This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The informants consisted of four UIN Palopo students selected using purposive sampling. The informants consisted of one male student and three female students from the Islamic Guidance and Counseling, Islamic Religious Education, and Islamic Education Management study programs, all of whom were eighth-semester students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the dynamics of romantic relationships experienced by students developed through several stages, namely introduction, emotional closeness, commitment, conflict, and the end of the relationship. Communication, attention, trust, openness, and emotional attachment were important elements in the development and maintenance of relationships. Romantic relationships had positive impacts in the form of emotional support, comfort, attention, a place to share stories and problems, and increased motivation. Meanwhile, negative impacts included sadness, disappointment, feelings of loss, stress, anxiety, frustration, mood changes, difficulty regulating emotions, decreased appetite, loss of motivation, and reduced social interaction. Thus, romantic relationships can have both positive and negative impacts on students' mental health depending on the dynamics and experiences that occur within the relationship.

Keywords : Romantic Relationships, Mental Health, UIN Palopo Students.



Abstrak

Hubungan romantis merupakan salah satu bentuk hubungan interpersonal yang dapat memengaruhi kondisi emosional dan psikologis mahasiswa. Hubungan romantis dapat memberikan dukungan emosional, kenyamanan, perhatian, wadah untuk berbagi masalah, serta motivasi. Namun, permasalahan dalam hubungan romantis—seperti kurangnya komunikasi, ketidakjujuran, pengkhianatan, dan tidak adanya restu keluarga—juga dapat menjadi sumber tekanan emosional dan psikologis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dinamika hubungan romantis serta dampaknya terhadap kesehatan mental mahasiswa UIN Palopo. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Informan penelitian terdiri atas empat orang mahasiswa UIN Palopo yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Informan tersebut meliputi satu mahasiswa laki-laki dan tiga mahasiswa perempuan dari program studi Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam, Pendidikan Agama Islam, dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, yang semuanya merupakan mahasiswa semester delapan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dinamika hubungan romantis yang dialami mahasiswa berkembang melalui beberapa tahapan, yaitu pengenalan, kedekatan emosional, komitmen, konflik, dan berakhirnya hubungan. Komunikasi, perhatian, kepercayaan, keterbukaan, dan ikatan emosional merupakan elemen penting dalam perkembangan dan pemeliharaan hubungan. Hubungan romantis memberikan dampak positif berupa dukungan emosional, kenyamanan, perhatian, wadah untuk berbagi cerita dan masalah, serta peningkatan motivasi. Sementara itu, dampak negatif yang muncul meliputi kesedihan, kekecewaan, rasa kehilangan, stres, kecemasan, frustrasi, perubahan suasana hati, kesulitan mengelola emosi, penurunan nafsu makan, hilangnya motivasi, dan berkurangnya interaksi sosial. Dengan demikian, hubungan romantis dapat memberikan dampak positif maupun negatif terhadap kesehatan mental mahasiswa, bergantung pada dinamika dan pengalaman yang terjadi di dalam hubungan tersebut.

Kata Kunci : Hubungan Romantis, Kesehatan Mental, Mahasiswa UIN Palopo.

1. INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationships are part of interpersonal experiences that can occur during the period of university study. Students do not only face academic demands but also experience various social and emotional relationships with people around them. One form of interpersonal relationship that can influence students' emotional experiences is a romantic relationship.

Romantic relationships can provide positive experiences for students. The presence of a partner can provide attention, affection, comfort, emotional support, and a place to share personal and academic problems. A partner may also become a source of motivation when students experience difficulties in their academic or personal lives.

However, romantic relationships do not always develop positively. Problems such as lack of communication, dishonesty, betrayal, lack of openness, and lack of family approval may create conflict. When these problems cannot be resolved, the relationship may end and affect the emotional and psychological condition of the individuals involved.

The impact of romantic relationships can be seen through various emotional experiences. Students may experience sadness, disappointment, anxiety, stress, frustration, mood changes, difficulty regulating emotions, decreased motivation, changes in appetite, and reduced social interaction. These experiences demonstrate that romantic relationships can become an important factor in students' emotional lives.

Mental health in this study refers to students' emotional and psychological conditions in dealing with life experiences and problems. Mental health is related to the ability to manage emotions, deal



with pressure, think clearly, and continue carrying out daily activities. Therefore, the experiences students have in romantic relationships are important to examine in relation to their mental health.

Attachment Theory is used as the main theoretical perspective in this study. The theory is considered relevant because romantic relationships involve emotional attachment between individuals. When a partner becomes a source of comfort, attention, and emotional support, the relationship may provide a sense of security. Conversely, when emotional attachment is disrupted by conflict, betrayal, lack of family approval, or the end of a relationship, individuals may experience emotional responses such as sadness, anxiety, frustration, and feelings of loss.

The Stress Process Perspective is also relevant in understanding relationship problems as sources of stress. Relationship conflicts can create emotional pressure, while different individuals may respond to the same problem differently depending on their experiences and ways of dealing with stress. Social support is also important in helping students face emotional pressure. Support can come from partners, friends, family, and other people in the student's social environment. Such support may help students deal with relationship problems and recover from difficult emotional experiences.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand the experiences and emotional conditions of students based on their direct experiences in romantic relationships. The research was conducted in the environment where the informants lived, including locations on Jl. Bakau and Jl. Dr. Ratulangi, Kelurahan Balandai, Kecamatan Bara, Kota Palopo. The research was conducted from 16 April 2026 to 8 May 2026.

The informants were selected using purposive sampling based on criteria relevant to the research objectives. There were four informants consisting of one male student and three female students from the Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam (BKI), Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI), and Manajemen Pendidikan Islam (MPI) study programs. All informants were eighth-semester students.

The identities of the informants were represented by initials, namely MR, H, N, and R, to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore the informants' experiences in romantic relationships, including the process of developing relationships, emotional closeness, commitment, communication, conflicts, relationship problems, emotional responses, and experiences after the relationship ended.

Data analysis was conducted through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting and organizing information relevant to the research focus. The data were then presented according to the themes identified from the interviews. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the patterns and findings obtained from the research.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research involved four UIN Palopo students consisting of one male and three female students. The informants had different experiences in their romantic relationships. Based on the interviews, the dynamics of their relationships could be identified through several stages, namely introduction, emotional closeness, commitment, conflict, and the end of the relationship.

The research also found that romantic relationships produced both positive and negative experiences for the informants. Positive experiences included emotional support, comfort, attention, a place to share, and motivation. Meanwhile, negative experiences appeared particularly when the relationships experienced conflict, betrayal, lack of family approval, or ended.

Dynamics of Romantic Relationships

The dynamics of romantic relationships experienced by the informants developed gradually. The relationship began through the process of getting to know one another and communicating. Continued communication and attention contributed to the development of emotional closeness.



As emotional closeness increased, the relationship developed into a stronger commitment. At this stage, the partner could become an important person in the informant's life and a place to share personal and academic problems.

The existence of emotional attachment also made the relationship more meaningful to the informants. Therefore, when problems occurred, the impact was not limited to the relationship itself but could also affect the informants' emotional conditions.

The conflicts experienced by the informants were different. Some relationships ended because they did not receive family approval, while other relationships experienced betrayal. Other problems included lack of communication, dishonesty, and lack of openness.

The findings demonstrate that romantic relationships are dynamic and may change according to the interaction, communication, trust, commitment, and problems experienced by the individuals involved.

Lack of Family Approval

One of the relationship problems experienced by the informants was lack of family approval. The absence of family approval created an emotional conflict because the informants had already developed emotional attachment to their partners. The situation created sadness, emotional pressure, and difficulty accepting the end of the relationship. The experience demonstrates that romantic relationships are not influenced solely by the individuals involved. Family considerations may also influence the continuity of a relationship. From the perspective of the Stress Process Model, lack of family approval can become an external source of stress. The emotional pressure experienced by students depends on how strongly they are attached to their partners and how they respond to the situation.

Betrayal in Romantic Relationships

Another significant problem found in the research was betrayal. The experience of betrayal resulted in disappointment, loss of trust, sadness, and emotional pressure. For some informants, betrayal affected their ability to trust others. The experience also produced excessive thinking and uncertainty about future relationships. Betrayal can be understood through Attachment Theory because it disrupts the sense of security and trust that has developed within a romantic relationship. When trust is damaged, the individual may experience emotional instability and difficulty rebuilding interpersonal trust.

Positive Impacts of Romantic Relationships

Although romantic relationships can create problems, the findings also demonstrate several positive impacts. First, romantic relationships can provide emotional support. A partner can become someone who listens to and understands the problems experienced by students. Second, romantic relationships can provide comfort and attention. Feeling cared for can create positive emotional experiences. Third, partners can become a place to share personal and academic problems. Students may discuss difficulties and receive emotional encouragement from their partners. Fourth, romantic relationships can provide motivation and encouragement. Attention and support from partners can increase students' enthusiasm in carrying out their activities. The findings therefore indicate that romantic relationships should not be viewed only as a source of psychological problems. A healthy relationship can also become a source of emotional support.

Negative Impacts on Mental Health

The negative impacts found in the research mainly emerged when relationships experienced conflict or ended.

The informants experienced sadness, disappointment, feelings of loss, stress, anxiety, frustration, mood changes, and difficulty regulating emotions. Some informants also experienced decreased appetite and loss of motivation. Emotional pressure also affected social interaction and daily activities.



These findings indicate that relationship problems can influence several aspects of students' lives. The effect is not limited to emotional feelings but may also influence motivation, social interaction, and daily activities.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that romantic relationships among UIN Palopo students are dynamic experiences involving emotional closeness, commitment, conflict, and, in some cases, the end of the relationship. The dynamics found in this study are closely related to Attachment Theory. Emotional attachment causes a partner to become an important source of comfort, attention, and emotional support. When the relationship functions positively, attachment can contribute to positive emotional experiences.

However, when attachment is disrupted by betrayal, conflict, lack of family approval, or separation, the informants may experience sadness, anxiety, frustration, feelings of loss, and decreased motivation. The findings are also consistent with the Stress Process Perspective. Relationship problems can function as stressors, but the responses to these stressors differ between individuals. This difference can be seen in the way the informants experienced and responded to relationship problems.

The findings also demonstrate the importance of social support. When a romantic relationship provides attention, affection, and a place to share problems, it can function as an emotional support system. However, when the relationship becomes a source of pressure, support from friends, family, and the surrounding environment becomes important in helping students cope with emotional difficulties.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that romantic relationships do not have a single effect on students' mental health. The impact depends on how the relationship develops, the quality of communication, the level of trust and openness, the presence of conflict, and how students respond to problems within the relationship.

Thus, a romantic relationship can function as a source of psychological support when it provides security, attention, communication, and positive emotional experiences. Conversely, conflict, betrayal, lack of family approval, and the end of a relationship can become sources of emotional pressure.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that romantic relationships among UIN Palopo students involve a dynamic process consisting of introduction, emotional closeness, commitment, conflict, and the end of the relationship.

1. The dynamics of romantic relationships are influenced by communication, attention, trust, openness, commitment, and emotional attachment. Relationship problems may arise from lack of communication, dishonesty, betrayal, and lack of family approval.
2. Romantic relationships have both positive and negative impacts on students' mental health. Positive impacts include emotional support, comfort, attention, a place to share personal and academic problems, and increased motivation.
3. Negative impacts include sadness, disappointment, feelings of loss, stress, anxiety, frustration, mood changes, difficulty regulating emotions, decreased appetite, loss of motivation, and reduced social interaction.
4. The findings demonstrate that romantic relationships can become a source of emotional support when they provide security and positive experiences. Conversely, conflict, betrayal, lack of family approval, and the end of a relationship can become sources of emotional pressure.

Attachment Theory is the most relevant theoretical perspective for interpreting the findings because the experiences of the informants demonstrate the importance of emotional attachment and the emotional responses that occur when that attachment is disrupted.



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