



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL SUPPORT AND FAMILY COPING AMONG PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

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ABSTRACT

Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder of global concern because of its high prevalence. Family support is essential in the care of patients with schizophrenia, especially in facilitating adaptive coping with psychological stress. Study employed a quantitative correlational design with a cross-sectional approach. Data were collected using the MSPSS and the Brief COPE questionnaires. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using the SPSS. The majority of respondents were male (55.7%), aged 46–55 years (29.6%), self-employed (49.6%), married (92.2%), and were the patients' parents (35.7%). Bivariate analysis using the Spearman Rank correlation test revealed a significant association between social support and family coping ($p < 0.05$; $r = 0.631$), indicating a strong correlation. The higher the level of social support received by the family, the more adaptive the coping mechanisms used in caring for patients with schizophrenia, which may contribute to improved patient quality of life.

Keywords: coping; family; sosial support

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INTRODUCTION

Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder characterized by disturbances in thought processes, emotions, and behavior, which significantly impair social functioning and daily activities. This disorder is chronic in nature and requires long-term treatment, resulting not only in clinical consequences for affected individuals but also in substantial psychosocial impacts on families and the broader social environment. Globally, schizophrenia remains a major mental health concern, including in Indonesia, where prevalence varies across regions. Low treatment adherence and high relapse rates further contribute to decreased patient quality of life and increased family burden.(Asana Putri & Fitria Maharani, 2022; Kebijakan Pembangunan et al., 2023; Octavia Indri Puspita Dewi, 2021; Palupi et al., 2019; Subardjo & Nurmaguphita, 2021)

The care of patients with schizophrenia is often challenging due to symptom exacerbation, impaired social functioning, and the emergence of risky behaviors, all of which place considerable emotional, social, and financial strain on families serving as caregivers.(Ariska & Scholichah, 2023; Easter Yanti & Sari, 2021) To manage these demands, families rely on effective coping mechanisms. Adaptive coping enables constructive adjustment to caregiving stress, whereas maladaptive coping may intensify psychological burden and reduce the quality of care.(Easter Yanti & Sari, 2021; Mokwena & Ngoveni, 2020)

Social support is a key determinant of effective family coping. Adequate support from family members, friends, healthcare professionals, and the social environment serves as a protective factor

that reduces stress and enhances family adaptability. Although previous studies have demonstrated an association between social support and adaptive coping, findings remain inconsistent, highlighting the need for further investigation. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between social support and family coping mechanisms among outpatients with schizophrenia at Dr. Amino Gondohutomo Psychiatric Hospital, Semarang, to inform family-based care approaches and improve patient quality of life.(Angraeni et al., 2023; Ediati, 2016; Kamenov et al., 2016)

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design with a cross-sectional approach. The study was conducted at Dr. Amino Gondohutomo Psychiatric Hospital, Semarang, and involved family members of outpatients with schizophrenia as the study participants. A total of 115 respondents were included using a total sampling technique. In this study, social support was defined as the independent variable, while family coping mechanisms were considered the dependent variable. Data were collected using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) 1.83 (S CVI/UA) and 0.91 (S-CVI/Ave).(Angraeni et al., 2023) The Indonesian version of the Brief COPE questionnaire has been demonstrated to be valid and reliable, with item-total correlation coefficients (r) ranging from 0.366 to 0.826, exceeding the critical r-table value of 0.361, and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.746. Data analysis consisted of univariate and bivariate analyses. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed; therefore, the relationships between variables were analyzed using the Spearman Rank correlation test with a significance level of 5%.

RESULT

This study involved 115 respondents who were family members of outpatients with schizophrenia at Dr. Amino Gondohutomo Psychiatric Hospital, Semarang. Univariate analysis showed that the majority of respondents were male (55.7%), aged 46–55 years (29.6%), self-employed (49.6%), and married (92.2%). Most respondents were the patients' parents (35.7%), with senior high school as the most common highest level of education (33.9%). In addition, the majority of respondents had been providing care for more than 36 months (65.3%).

Tabel 1.

Respondent characteristics (n= 115)

Respondent characteristics	Category	f	%
Family Gender	Male	64	55,7
	Female	51	44,3
Family Age	Adolescents (16-25 years)	5	4,3
	Early adulthood (26-35 years)	20	17,4
	Adulthood (36-45 years)		
	Early elderly (46-55 years)	22	19,1
	Middle elderly (56-65 years)	34	29,6
	Late elderly (>65 years)	22	19,1
Family Occupation		12	10,4
	Homemaker	25	21,7
	Self-employed	57	49,6
	Education	6	5,2
	Manual Laborer	11	9,6
	Agriculture	4	3,5
	Trader	4	3,5
	Retired	4	3,5
	Healthcare	2	1,7
	Others	2	1,7
Family Mariatal Status	Married	106	92,2
	Single	9	7,8

Respondent characteristics	Category	f	%
Relations with the patient	Parent	41	35,7
	Child	16	13,9
	Sibling	28	24,3
	Husband	18	15,7
	Wife	10	8,7
	Others	2	1,7
Family Education	Elementary school / equivalent	22	19,1
	Junior high school / equivalent	19	16,5
	Senior high school / equivalent	39	33,9
	Vocational high school / equivalent	9	7,8
	Diploma	9	7,8
	Bachelor's degree	15	13,0
	University student	2	1,7
Duration of Caregiving	< 6 months	2	1,7
	6-36 months	38	33,0
	>36 months	75	65,2

Univariate analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were male (55.7%), aged 46–55 years (29.6%), self-employed (49.6%), and married (92.2%). Most respondents were the patients' parents (35.7%), with senior high school as the most common highest level of education (33.9%). The majority of respondents had been providing care for more than 36 months (65.3%). Bivariate analysis using the Spearman Rank correlation test demonstrated a statistically significant association between social support and family coping mechanisms ($p < 0.05$). The correlation coefficient was $r = 0.631$, indicating a strong positive relationship, in which higher levels of social support were associated with more adaptive coping mechanisms in the care of patients with schizophrenia.

Tabel 1.
Bivariate Analysis

Variable		Bivariate Analysis				Total	p	r	
		Family Coping							
		Maladaptive		Adaptive					
		(28-70)		(71-112)					
		f	%	f	%	f	%		
Social support	Low (12-35)	2	100,0	0	0,0	2	100,0	0,000	0,631
	Moderate (36-60)	15	42,9	20	57,1	35	100,0		
	High (61-84)	0	0,0	78	100,0	78	100,0		

DISCUSSION

Social support is one of the primary factors influencing the family coping process. Support received from family members, the surrounding environment, and healthcare professionals plays an important role in determining the coping strategies adopted by families. Social support encompasses emotional, instrumental, informational, and companionship support. In this study, emotional support was the most frequently received form, including attention, advice, and information. Such support facilitates the development of adaptive coping strategies, including both problem-focused coping and positive emotion-focused coping, such as seeking social support, self-control, accepting responsibility, and positive reappraisal. (Alva Levia et al., 2024; Supriyati, 2023)

Adaptive coping is an integral component of the problem-solving process that enables individuals to think rationally and adjust effectively to stressful situations. Families with adequate problem-solving skills tend to manage stress more effectively and demonstrate adaptive coping responses. Adequate social support has been shown to reduce caregiver stress levels, whereas insufficient social support is associated with increased use of maladaptive coping strategies. These findings underscore the important role of social support as a reinforcing factor in strengthening family adaptability in caring for patients with schizophrenia. (Candra Alim et al., 2023; Patricia et al., 2024)

CONCLUSION

The results of this study on the relationship between social support and family coping among patients with schizophrenia at Dr. Amino Gondohutomo Psychiatric Hospital, Semarang, demonstrated a positive association with a strong level of correlation ($p = 0.000$; $r = 0.631$).

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