THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COGNITIVE JEALOUSY AND STRESS LEVELS IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN EMERGING ADULTHOOD

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in emerging adulthood individuals who are in romantic relationships. Lazarus & Folkman's theory and Pfeiffer and Wong's theory are used as a framework for understanding how cognitive jealousy can influence stress levels. The research method used is quantitative with a correlational approach. Data was collected through an online survey using an adapted questionnaire of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS) and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). The results of data analysis show that there is a relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in 290 participants. These findings highlight the importance of awareness of the emotional impact of romantic relationships in emerging adulthood individuals. The research results show that there is a significant and directly proportional relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in emerging adults who are in a romantic relationship. This means that the higher the level of cognitive jealousy experienced by emerging adulthood individuals who are in a romantic relationship, the higher the level of stress experienced by the individual.

KEYWORDS	*Cognitive Jealousy, Stress Levels, Emerging Adulthood, Romantic Relationship, Correlation*

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creatures who cannot live alone. Human life is realized and fulfilled through interactions with other individuals (Widowati, C., 2013). These interactions form what are called interpersonal relationships, which include

family relationships, friendships, professional relationships, platonic relationships, and romantic relationships (Baron & Branscombe, 2017).

Emerging adulthood is a transitional phase between adolescence and early adulthood that occurs between the ages of 18 - 25 years (Arnett, 2000). At this time, emerging adulthood individuals have reached an age where they are starting to face many problems and are emotionally tense (Mappiare, 1983). Therefore, romantic relationships are an important role in an individual's life at this phase. This is supported by Collins, et al., (2009) who stated that having a romantic relationship is considered important during this phase and is seen as a step towards maturity.

Based on preliminary data conducted by researchers, the majority of emerging adulthood individuals are currently in romantic relationships. For individuals who are in a romantic relationship, romantic jealousy becomes the dominant issue in their relationship. 25 of the 41 respondents to the initial data experienced romantic jealousy in their relationship. According to 20 respondents to preliminary data, the romantic jealousy they felt started from individual thoughts that caused worry or fear regarding their partner's involvement in an affair. This is in line with one of the dimensions of romantic jealousy, namely the cognitive jealousy dimension proposed by Pfeiffer and Wong (1989). This thinking can cause various negative changes in the individual's mood and daily activities and ultimately pose a threat to the individual. This can also be a source of stress for them which is in line with the concept of stress proposed by Lazarus & Folkman (1984).

The aim of this research is to identify the relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in emerging adulthood. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide further understanding regarding the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in the context of romantic relationships in emerging adulthood. Practically, it is hoped that the results of this research will provide useful information for general readers regarding the relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels and their dynamics. Apart from that, for psychologists, this research can be an additional source for understanding the cognitive dynamics of individuals who experience levels of stress due to cognitive jealousy. This research can also be a reference for further research in the same field, as well as for developing research based on data and its limitations.

Literature Review
Romantic Relationship

Romantic Relationship or a loving relationship between lovers, can be interpreted as a relationship entered into voluntarily between two individuals who have their own unique qualities, and in the end agree to continue living together with each other (Ayu, A., 2007). Romantic jealousy as explained by Clanton (1996) is a complex emotion that arises in intimate relationships, involving feelings of sadness, anger and fear due to suspicion of a partner's loyalty. This definition is reinforced by Pfeiffer & Wong (1989) who emphasize that romantic jealousy is a reaction to stimuli that raise suspicion and worry about a partner's loyalty. In the dimension of romantic jealousy, Pfeiffer and Wong (1989) divided it into three types, namely cognitive jealousy, emotional jealousy, and behavioral jealousy. In this study, researchers focused research on the cognitive variable jealousy.

Cognitive jealousy is a worry or fear about a partner's involvement in an affair. For example, individuals who always think that their partner is in a romantic relationship with someone else, but this is not necessarily what actually happens. In the end, this gives rise to thoughts that the other person is a threat.

Stress

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define an individual's assessment of himself and his environment, which is considered to exceed the available resources. When an individual feels that the events that occur exceed the capacity of the resources available to him, various negative changes will arise in the individual's mood, daily activities and ultimately create a threat to the individual. This assessment occurs through two processes: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. Primary appraisal describes how individuals interpret events that occur, divided into irrelevant, benign-positive, and stressful. If an individual interprets an event as stressful, it will then be interpreted again as harm/loss, threat and challenge. On the other hand, secondary appraisal is an individual's assessment of their own abilities whether they will be successful or not in interpreting the events that occur. According to Lazarus and Folkman, stress is influenced by the way individuals evaluate themselves and the adequacy of resources in relation to the environment and events that occur.

Emerging Adulthood

According to Arnett (2000), emerging adulthood is the stage between adolescence and early adulthood between the ages of 18 and 25 years. This period is characterized by identity exploration, instability, focus on the self, feelings of in-betweenness, and optimism about the possibilities of the future. Individuals at this stage seek meaning in love, work, and ideology while developing a more defined identity. This period is often marked by changes in living arrangements, work, and relationships as individuals attempt to establish themselves. Emerging adulthood individuals tend to focus on themselves, develop knowledge and skills, and make decisions independently. Individuals at this stage are full of optimistic enthusiasm for the future, without considering the possibility of failure or disappointment.

In research, Muna, N. (2007) has shown a relationship between romantic jealousy and stress levels in individuals, showing that the higher the romantic jealousy in teenagers, the higher the level of stress they experience. Meanwhile, other research conducted by Jaremko, M. (1979) showed that respondents with high levels of jealousy and people with low levels of jealousy ultimately used stress coping well. However, the difference is that someone who has a high level of jealousy usually increases the chances of experiencing self-doubt, anxiety and depression.

There are differences in this research with research that has been conducted previously. It is hoped that the limitations in previous research can be developed again by this research, where researchers will try to use convenience sampling based on criteria, namely emerging adulthood individuals who are in a romantic relationship, changing measuring instruments for the two variables, and increasing the number of research samples. So in this research, researchers will conduct similar

research but with a different methodology from previous research. To conduct this research, researchers have obtained ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Padjadjaran University, Bandung with number 413/UN6.KEP/EC/2024

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach which allows collecting and presenting data in numerical form (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2017). This research uses a correlational method to determine the relationship between cognitive jealousy variables and stress levels in romantic relationships in emerging adulthood. Data collection was carried out through a survey method using questionnaires distributed online via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, LINE, and Instagram using Google Forms. Participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding cognitive jealousy and stress levels. In answering the questions in the questionnaire, participants are asked to adjust their answers according to what they think or feel.

This research uses a questionnaire in the form of a survey distributed online via Google Forms. The measuring instrument used to measure the cognitive jealousy variable is the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS) which was adapted into Indonesian by Hanamawaddani (2019) based on the theory of Pfeiffer & Wong (1989) and to measure the stress level variable is the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) measuring instrument. made by Hasni (2016), in Sentani (2020). Both measuring instruments have carried out validity tests through expert review. Based on the results of the reliability test on the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS) measuring instrument, the result was 0.89 and on the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) measuring instrument, the result was 0.88, which means that both measuring instruments are reliable.

Participants in this study were emerging adulthood individuals (aged 18-25 years) who had been in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months because according to research by Sacher & Fine (1996), every couple in a romantic relationship will show involvement and seriousness after the relationship lasts for at least 6 months. In this study, a total of 290 research participants were obtained, consisting of emerging adulthood individuals who had been in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months and had experienced or were experiencing jealousy in West Java Province. Demographic data was obtained in the form of gender, age and province from all respondents. Based on the data obtained, the majority of participants in this study were women (N = 187, 64.5%), aged 21 years (N = 86, 29.7%).

The software used is IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. A correlation test will be carried out to determine the relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in emerging adulthood. The analysis carried out in this study used the Spearman's Rho correlation test because the data was not normally distributed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the number of participants involved in data analysis to correlate the cognitive jealousy variables and stress levels was 290 people. In this chapter,

the researcher explains the results and discussion of the research, in the form of a descriptive test of the cognitive jealousy variable and the stress level variable consisting of the perceived distress dimension to measure the primary appraisal dimension and perceived control to measure the secondary appraisal dimension in 290 participants.

The following table presents the complete demographic data of all participants in this study.

Table 1. Demographic Data

Demographic	N	%
Gender		
Male	103	35.52%
Female	187	64.48%
Age		
18	21	7.2%
19	19	6.6%
20	37	12,8%
21	85	29.7%
22	70	24.5%
23	32	11.4%
24	13	4.5%
25	10	3.4%
Total	**290**	**100%**

In this study, demographic data including gender and age of all respondents were obtained. Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of participants in this study were female (N=187, 64.48%) and aged 21 years old (N=85, 29.5%).

Based on the results of descriptive test data processing, the average total cognitive jealousy score from 290 participants was 26.38. The minimum score or smallest score obtained by respondents was 8. Meanwhile, the maximum score or largest score obtained by respondents was 56.

Based on the results of descriptive test data processing, the average total stress level score from 290 participants was 46.32. Then, researchers grouped participants' scores into three categories, namely low, medium and high. The majority of participants in this study, namely 155 participants (53.44%) showed stress levels in

the high category. Meanwhile, there were 129 participants (44.48%) who showed moderate levels of stress and there were 6 (2%) participants who showed low levels of stress.

Table 2 below shows the results of the descriptive analysis of romantic jealousy in 290 emerging adulthood participants who are currently in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months.

Table 2. Results of Correlation Test between Cognitve Jealousy and Stress Level

		1.	2.
1.	TS - *Cognitive Jealousy*	—	0.379**
2.	TS – Stress Level	0.379**	—

* * p-value < 0.01, * p-value < 0.05

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that there is a correlation between the cognitive jealousy variable and the stress level variable in emerging adults who have been in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months, referring to the positive correlation coefficient value of 0.379. If we refer to the correlation criteria according to Guilford (1956), the correlation between the variable cognitive jealousy and stress levels is included in the low correlation.

Discussion

Based on the results of the cognitive jealousy descriptive test, it was found that the majority of emerging adulthood individuals who were in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months showed a high level of cognitive jealousy. This means that the majority of participants indicated that they had high levels of suspicion, worry and negative thoughts towards their partners.

In this research, it can be seen that there is a significant and directly proportional relationship between the cognitive jealousy variable and the stress level variable in emerging adulthood who have been in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months. This means that the higher the level of cognitive jealousy experienced by emerging adulthood individuals who are in a romantic relationship, the higher the level of stress experienced by the individual.

Emerging adulthood, as the stage between adolescence and early adulthood, is often marked by identity exploration and establishing romantic relationships. Romantic jealousy, as a complex emotion in relationships, can be a stress trigger that triggers a stress response in individuals. The theory from Lazarus & Folkman (1984) with primary appraisal and secondary appraisal dimensions provides a framework for understanding how cognitive jealousy can influence stress levels. The assessment of events that cause cognitive jealousy in emerging adulthood individuals' romantic relationships becomes a stressor which is the result of a person's cognitive assessment.

In this study, research participants assessed the phenomenon of cognitive jealousy as stressful. Events that are considered stressful can be divided into three, namely harm/loss, threat, and challenge. Research participants also ultimately

considered cognitive jealousy as harm/loss and threat because individuals thought about the losses that had occurred to themselves and felt that they did not have the capacity to get through the events that occurred.

There is a significant relationship between the cognitive variable jealousy and stress levels in emerging adulthood individuals who have been in a romantic relationship for at least 6 months. Individuals who experienced cognitive jealousy in this study had high levels of stress. This means that they tend to think negative things such as thinking about their partner having a close relationship with someone else and thinking about the possibility that someone might be attracted to their partner. Participants also tended to feel worried because maybe someone else was trying to seduce their partner and in the end their partner was attracted to the advances. In addition, participants felt suspicious of their partners that their partners might meet and have physical contact with other people secretly. This shows that the higher the level of cognitive jealousy experienced by emerging adulthood individuals who are in a romantic relationship, the higher the level of stress experienced by the individual.

Research Limitations

In the research that has been carried out, researchers realize that there are many shortcomings in this research. Therefore, researchers put forward several suggestions so that improvements can be made in future research. First, future researchers can consider using probability sampling techniques, so that the results of the research can be more generalized. Apart from that, future researchers are expected to pay more attention to the proportion of age and gender of participants so that research participants are more evenly distributed and balanced. Then, it is hoped that future researchers will be able to pay attention to the length of the romantic relationship experienced by the participants. Finally, future researchers can consider conducting research at other stages of development besides emerging adulthood.

CONCLUSION

Researchers identified a relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels in emerging adulthood. In line with previous research, there is a significant relationship between the cognitive jealousy variable and the stress level variable experienced by emerging adulthood individuals. This shows that participants tend to be suspicious and view their partner's behavior negatively, as well as feel annoyed and behave protectively towards their partner.

The results of this study support previous research regarding the relationship between cognitive jealousy and stress levels, especially in emerging adulthood individuals. In this study, there are research results that show high levels of cognitive jealousy and high levels of stress in emerging adulthood individuals who are in romantic relationships. This means that efforts are needed to anticipate these problems so that romantic relationships in emerging adulthood can run healthily and well. There also needs to be awareness and efforts from emerging adulthood individuals to try to think positively to strengthen self-confidence in their partners. Apart from that, when the stress level is felt to be too high and is felt to be

disturbing, emerging adulthood individuals who are in a romantic relationship need to make efforts to increase their awareness by consulting with competent parties such as counselors or psychologists.

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