

Psychological Well-Being Of Student Cat Owners: Is There A Role For Pet Attachment And Emotion Regulation?

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ABSTRACT

Having a cat can bring about changes in a student's life, affecting their PWB (psychological well-being). Pet attachment and emotional regulation are sources for student cat owners to obtain optimal levels of PWB. This study aims to determine the relationship between pet attachment and emotion regulation with PWB in student cat owners. This research gathered 78 student cat owners using accidental sampling technique. The measurement tools used are LAPS (Lexington Attachment to Pet Scale), emotional regulation scale, and psychological well-being scale. Multiple linear regression analysis was applied to test the correlation between the three variables. The results obtained in this study were 40.715 with $p=0.000$ ($p<0.01$). This indicates that there is a very significant positive relationship between pet attachment and emotion regulation with PWB. Pet attachment and emotion regulation have an influence of 52.1% on PWB.

Keywords: Emotion Regulation; Pet Attachment; Psychological Well-Being

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INTRODUCTION

College students are included in the late adolescent development period which is generally in the age range of 18-25 years (Yusuf, 2019). At that time, students as teenagers had many responsibilities and demands from the surrounding environment, both in lectures and in their social environment. Due to the many demands and tight routines of being a student, fatigue in doing homework makes most students feel bored (Dyson & Renk, 2006). Therefore, to overcome the boredom experienced by students, they can make pet-keeping activities a hobby and can satisfy the desired desire for happiness (Asmarany & Setiawan, 2019).

At present, pets have a role in fulfilling one of the individual needs, namely the need to be happy (Erliza & Atmasari, 2022). Based on data from the Rakuten Insight Center, cats are animals with the highest percentage of pets in Indonesia. Cats are popularly kept by Indonesian people because cats are animals that are not unclean according to Islam (Hafizhah & Hamdan, 2021). Having a cat can reduce the stress level of its owner (Tyrestafani & Soetjningsih, 2022).

Having a cat as a pet makes the individual feel pleasure, happiness and meaningfulness (Indriani & Ervanda, 2021). Such a condition in psychology is called psychological well-being. Ryff et al., (1995) revealed that psychological well-being is a condition in which an individual has a positive attitude towards himself or others, has the ability to decide things according to himself and is able to control behaviour, is able to master an environment where he is in accordance with his needs, is able to determine meaningful life goals, and strives to develop his potential on a regular basis. There is a difference regarding the level of psychological well-being of individuals who have pets and those who do not have pets. Individuals who have pets tend to get good psychological well-being (Amiot et al.,

2022). A high level of psychological well-being can enable individuals to be able to build positive relationships with other people, have a sense of control over their own lives, and have goals in life (Ryff et al., 1995).

The longer the relationship between the owner and their pet, an attachment will arise between the owner and their pet, which can be called a pet attachment (Tyrestafani & Soetjningsih, 2022). The feeling of being owned and loved as it is by pets will tend to be owned by pet owners (Zilcha-Mano et al., 2012). Pet attachment can be explained using the attachment theory which means that the attachment that occurs in pets has an emotional bond between the pet and its owner which can be seen by the tendency to obtain or maintain security (Karen, 2010).

Pet attachment is related to social support which is one of the external factors of psychological well-being. This is because social support does not only come from human sources but can also come from loyal pets (Taylor, 2015). Pets have a role that can replace the role of other people in their owner's life, pets are also able to provide visible affection to their owners. So this can affect a better level of psychological well-being (Indriani & Ervanda, 2021). Previous research found that pet attachment has a significant positive relationship with psychological well-being (Tyrestefani & Soetjningsih, 2022).

In addition to the attachment that exists between pets and their owners which is one of the factors for the formation of psychological well-being, the ability to properly regulate emotions is also an important factor for creating psychological well-being in individuals. Psychological well-being can be influenced by emotional regulation because the ability to manage emotions will determine one's feelings of well-being (Arjanggi & Fauziah, 2021).

According to Gross dan Thompson (2007) emotion regulation is a strategy carried out by individuals to maintain, increase or decrease feelings, behaviors, and physiological responses consciously or unconsciously. The process of emotion regulation not only reduces the intensity or frequency of emotional states but also develops the capacity to produce and maintain emotions (Preece et al., 2020). In addition, when the emotion regulation process occurs, it does not only focus on negative emotions but also includes positive emotions so that individuals do not overdo it when they are in a happy situation (Preece et al., 2020). Having good emotional regulation abilities will enable a person to inhibit forms of impulsive behavior when experiencing negative emotions so that he is able to behave in accordance with the desired goals (Hapsari & Puspitasari, 2022).

The results of previous research (Farhanna & Tatiyani, 2022) me found that there was a significant positive relationship between emotion regulation and psychological well-being. (Syahda & Handoyo, 2022) also said in his research that there was a significant influence between emotion regulation on psychological well-being. Research by Arjanggi dan Fauziah (2021) states that emotional regulation is correlated with psychological well-being. So that it can be interpreted that the better the emotional regulation that is owned will have a contribution to the formation of psychological well-being which is getting better too.

Based on the results of the studies and explanations above, it further strengthens the researcher to carry out this research further. This objective was chosen because the researcher wanted to prove "is it true that the closeness experienced by students who own cats can increase their psychological well-being?". The difference in this study is that the researchers focused on pet attachments only for cat owners, because based on data, cats are popular animals kept by Indonesian people. Researchers also want to at the same time know the relationship between pet attachment and emotion regulation with psychological well-being, there are several studies have not yet done this.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Psychological well-being is a state in which individuals are able to live happily on their past experiences and interpret these experiences as something valuable and proud of themselves (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). This definition itself also describes the constituent components of psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989) :

1. present and his past.
2. Positive relationships with others, namely the ability of individuals to establish warm interpersonal relationships with other people around them.
3. Autonomy, namely the ability of individuals to be free but still able to regulate life and internal behavior within themselves.
4. Environmental mastery, namely the ability of individuals to be able to manage, take advantage of opportunities that exist in the environment, create and control the environment according to their needs.
5. Purpose of life, namely the ability of the individual to clearly understand the purpose of life and the direction of his life, has the confidence that he is capable of achieving goals in his life, and can feel that all his life experiences have meaning.
6. Personal development (personal growth), namely the ability of an individual to develop his potential in a sustainable manner.

Factors that can affect psychological well-being are age, gender, socioeconomic status, culture (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), education level, social support, personality, spirituality (Liwarti, 2013).

The initial concept of pet attachment (attachment to pets) was based on Bolby's theory of attachment to humans (Tribudiman et al., 2020). (Bowlby, 1982) states that attachment is a form of emotional bond between two humans who try to maintain closeness to ensure that the relationship lasts a long time.

Johnson et al (1992) defines pet attachment as a form of interaction and emotional connection that exists between family members and their pets. The form of the relationship that arises is that there is a reciprocal relationship that gives attention to each other where dependence will appear between one another (the owner and his pet). Pet attachment is composed of 3 components (Johnson et al., 1992) :

1. General attachment, described as attachment in general, such as feeling happy when you are near pets, spending time with pets and feeling that pets understand all the feelings they have.
2. People substituting, describes the role of pets in the life of their owners.
3. Animal rights/animal welfare, described by the status of pets in the owner's home which can be expressed through individual knowledge and views regarding the rights and welfare of their pets.

Factors that can affect pet attachment are the type of pet, the length of time spent with the pet, cultural background (Karen, 2010), gender, length of time kept, domicile, pet race (Smolkovic et al., 2012).

According to Gross dan Thompson (2007) emotion regulation is a strategy carried out by individuals to maintain, increase and decrease feelings, behaviors, and physiological responses consciously or unconsciously. Emotion regulation itself cannot be separated from human life because in emotional regulation there are processes in regulating feelings, physiological reactions, cognition and

emotional responses that can control behavior to achieve a goal that is in accordance with situational demands (Hasmarlin & Hirmaningsih, 2019).

There are three components in emotion regulation (Gross & Thompson, 2007), these components are :

1. Emotions monitoring, is the individual's ability to understand and be aware of the processes that occur within him, his feelings, thoughts to the background of all the actions he takes.
2. Evaluating emotions (emotions evaluating), is the ability that makes individuals able to see an event they are experiencing from a positive side and in the end can make a person take the goodness/wisdom behind the events that occur.
3. Emotions modification, is the individual's ability to modify emotions. This makes a person able to survive in the face of problems and continue to try to get through all the obstacles in his life well.

Factors that can affect emotion regulation are age, education, upbringing culture and gender (Mulyana et al., 2020).

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method with a correlational approach to observe the relationship between two or more variables. The variables used in this research are pet attachment as the independent variable (X1), emotional regulation as the independent variable (X2), and psychological well-being as the dependent variable (Y).

The research subjects in this study were 78 student cat owners who were collected using the accidental sampling technique. The special characteristics of the subject of this study are: 1). Student of the psychology faculty of the University of August 17, 1945 Surabaya, 2). Currently programming a thesis, 3.) currently raising a cat. This research was conducted on 30 May – 6 June 2023.

using a Likert scale with a range of 5-1 in the preparation of measuring instruments. In this study, the pet attachment scale was measured using the LAPS (Lexington Attachment to Pet Scale) proposed by (Johnson et al) has . The scale used to measure emotional regulation is the emotional regulation scale put forward by (Gross & Thompson, 2007). The scale used to measure the level of psychological well-being uses the PWB scale proposed by (Ryff, 1995).

The data analysis technique used in this research is multiple regression analysis technique, namely analysis is used to determine the relationship between pet attachment and emotional regulation with psychological well-being.

RESULT

Subjek penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa akhir fakultas psikologi Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya yang sedang memelihara kucing. Subjek yang dihimpun berjumlah 78 orang, dimana 67 orang adalah perempuan dan 21 sisanya adalah laki-laki. Rentang usia subjek yang mengisi skala penelitian adalah 21-25 tahun, yaitu usia 21 tahun sejumlah 19 orang, 22 tahun sejumlah 49 orang, 23 tahun sejumlah 17 orang, 24 tahun sejumlah 1 orang dan 25 tahun sejumlah 2 orang.

Tabel 4.1 Hasil Uji Korelasi Simultan

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8143,758	2	4071,879	40,715	0,000
Residual	7500,613	75	100,008		
Total	15644,372	77			

Based on the simultaneous correlation test table above, the hypothesis test related to the variable pet attachment (X1) and emotional regulation (X2) on psychological well-being (Y) yields an F value



of 40.715 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$). So thus, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis in this study which states that there is a very significant positive relationship between pet attachment and emotional regulation with psychological well-being in students who own cats can be accepted. The results obtained indicate that there is a joint effect between pet attachment (X1) and emotion regulation (X2) on psychological well-being (Y).

Tabel 4.2 Hasil Uji Korelasi Parsial

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<i>Pet Attachment</i>	0,275	0,69	0,318	3,968	0,000
Regulasi Emosi	0,805	0,102	0,630	7,864	0,000

Based on the data obtained in the table above, there are partial test results between pet attachment and psychological well-being which show a t score of 3.968 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.01$). So it can be concluded that there is a very significant positive correlation between pet attachment and psychological well-being. So that the first hypothesis in this study which states that there is a relationship between pet attachment and psychological well-being is acceptable. It can be interpreted that the higher the pet attachment that is owned will be accompanied by an increase in the psychological well-being of student cat owners, and vice versa, if the pet attachment is low it will be followed by a low level of psychological well-being as well.

Furthermore, the results of the partial correlation test between emotion regulation and psychological well-being obtained a t score of 7.864 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Thus indicating a very significant positive correlation between emotion regulation and psychological well-being. So thus, the second hypothesis in this study which states that there is a relationship between emotion regulation and psychological well-being can be accepted. It can be interpreted that the higher the level of emotion regulation that is owned will be accompanied by a higher level of psychological well-being, and vice versa, the lower the level of emotion regulation that is owned, the lower the level of psychological well-being will be.

Tabel 4.3 Koefisien Determinansi

Model	R	R Square
1	0,721	0,521

Based on the table above, the R Square value is 0.521, so it can be concluded that the variable pet attachment (X1) and emotion regulation (X2) in this study has a simultaneous effect of 52.1% on psychological well-being (Y) with the remaining 47.9% influenced by other predictors.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the relationship between pet attachment variables and emotional regulation with psychological well-being in student cat owners. In this study it was found that the variable pet attachment (X1) and emotional regulation (X2) simultaneously (together) had an influence on psychological well-being (Y). This is evidenced by the F value of 40.715 with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). So that the variables X1 and X2 in this study can be used as predictor variables in the psychological well-being (Y) variable. pet attachment. It can also be interpreted that there are two ways that students can do to have a good level of psychological well-being, namely by building an attachment to pets or pet attachment and the ability to regulate emotions well.

Furthermore, the partial regression coefficient results between pet attachment and psychological well-being produce a score of $t = 3.968$ with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) so that pet attachment and psychological well-being have a significant relationship. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Tyrestafani & Soetjningsih, 2022) regarding the relationship between pet attachment and psychological well-being in cat owners.

Pet attachments have an external role in influencing psychological well-being. In establishing a pet attachment, students indirectly also get social support from their pet cat. This is in line with Taylor (2015) which states that social support is not only obtained from human sources, but also from pets. It is said by Indriani and Ervanda (2021) that pets can replace the role of other people in their owner's life because pets are able to provide affection.

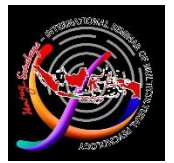
The existence of cats as pets owned by students will lead to a high attachment or pet attachment. A high level of pet attachment can increase the psychological well-being level of students (Tyrestafani & Soetjningsih, 2022). In addition, students who have a high pet attachment will tend to feel psychological well-being as stated by Johnson et al (1992) there are three aspects of pet attachment namely, general attachment, people substituting, animal welfare. So students who have a high pet attachment will have positive emotions, get support, have a sense of care, and be independent so that raising a cat can be one of the ways.

The results of testing the partial correlation coefficient between emotion regulation and psychological well-being yield a score of $t = 7.864$ with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05). It can be seen that there is a significant positive correlation between the variables of emotion regulation and psychological well-being. So it can be interpreted that the higher the level of emotional regulation ability possessed by students, the higher the level of psychological well-being they will have. The findings from this study indicate that emotional regulation has an influence on the level of psychological well-being of students.

The results of this study confirm again that emotion regulation strategies are an important factor for creating psychological well-being because managing emotions will determine a person's feelings of well-being. It is said that emotional regulation and psychological well-being have a correlation with the direction of a positive relationship, in other words, the higher the emotional regulation one has, the more psychological well-being will increase (Syahda & Handoyo, 2022).

Based on the calculation of the empirical mean and the hypothetical mean, the results show that the psychological well-being of students who own cats is high with a comparison of the empirical mean and the hypothetical mean ($108 < 125.91$). The pet attachment of student cat owners is high with a comparison of the empirical mean and the hypothetical mean ($81 < 107.76$). And the emotional regulation possessed by student cat owners is relatively high with a comparison of the empirical mean and the hypothetical mean ($72 < 79.43$). The high category is obtained with the condition that the hypothetical mean is greater than the empirical mean.

This study found that the effective contribution given by each independent variable to the dependent variable was 52.1%. The side of 47.9% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. The pet attachment variable provides an effective contribution of 11.3%. Meanwhile, the variable of emotion regulation makes an effective contribution of 40.8%. So it can be concluded that the emotion



regulation variables make a greater effective contribution to psychological well-being than pet attachments.

ACKNOWLEDGE, FUNDING & ETHICS POLICIES

The writer thanks profusely to those who supported the writer in conducting this research, parents, respondents, supervisors, and the Faculty of Psychology, University of 17 August 1945 Surabaya for the opportunity that was given so that the writer was able to complete this research well. The author also does not forget to express his gratitude to other parties who have provided material and moral assistance for the smooth running of this research

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