

DUCK SYNDROME OF WORKING COLLEGE STUDENT : UNCOVERING THE ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT RELATIONSHIP WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING

Diny Atrizka^{1*}, Ikbar Pratama², Hasrita Lubis³

¹ Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Medan Area, Medan, Indonesia

² Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Medan Area, Medan, Indonesia

³ Magister and Management, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Corresponding author: Diny Atrizka, Faculty of Psychology,
Universitas Medan Area, Medan, Indonesia. Email: diny.dinyrizk@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of organizational support and duck syndrome towards psychological well-being. It also seeks to determine whether duck syndrome mediates the relationship between organizational support and psychological well-being. A quantitative approach utilizing a total sampling technique was employed. The study involved 183 subjects—students who were also employed or we called as working college students. The research instruments included the Psychological Well-Being Scale, the Organizational Support Scale, and the Duck Syndrome Scale. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that duck syndrome mediates the relationship between organizational support and psychological well-being. Specifically, organizational support was found to have a significant positive direct effect on psychological well-being ($\beta=0.488$, $T=5.42$, $p=0.001$) but a negative effect on duck syndrome ($\beta=-0.412$, $T=6.18$, $p=0.001$). Duck syndrome was shown to mediate the relationship between organizational support and psychological well-being ($\beta=0.301$, $T=3.27$, $p=0.001$).

Keywords: organizational support; duck syndrome; psychological well being; working college students

INTRODUCTION

Various types of needs are becoming increasingly and complex along with the times. An important need to support the future is education, starting from primary education, secondary education to higher education by studying at university. Education to prepare human resources for nation and state development. Higher education is pursued by students who are given the title of student. The needs of students for the smooth running of their education are very diverse and need to be met. These diverse and increasing living needs make students look for ways to be able to fulfill their educational needs and also their living expenses. Some students find a way out by working. Students' lives as human beings cannot be separated from their psychological well-being. Every human being strives to create a life that is physically, socially and psychologically prosperous so that the quality of life improves. Students who continue their education to college with the main goal of learning and developing their mindset. The importance of students' psychological well-being is not in line with the reality they face. Economic conditions in Indonesia are quite difficult for some students. Some students have problems with costs, so they try to ease the burden on their parents and encourage students to study while working. This causes students to have to carry out two activities at once, namely studying and working. Most of the work done by students is part-time, because part-time work schedules are more flexible and this type of worker does not have a work contract. Being a university student is often accompanied by academic pressure, demands for independence, and intense competition. This condition requires students as individuals to maintain a strong self-image, even though internally they experience anxiety and mental fatigue (Sarafino & Smith, 2011). In fact, what is experienced by students working while studying is a reflection of

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the duck syndrome phenomenon. Duck syndrome is a popular term used to describe the condition of a person, including students, who appear calm, confident and organized on the surface, but are actually struggling behind the scenes to overcome academic, social and emotional pressure. This duck syndrome phenomenon explains the analogy of the term duck syndrome itself, namely a duck that appears to float calmly on the surface of the water, but its feet move quickly below the surface to maintain its balance (Stanford, 2022). Conditions like this in students indicate mental health problems that are not visible to the surrounding environment. Attention to mental health issues means highlighting the psychological well-being of students who study while working. Sumakul and Ruata (2020) revealed that there are several factors that influence an individual's psychological well-being, namely age, gender, education level and employment. Full support from the organization greatly influences the achievement of the psychological well-being of working people. Based on the explanation above, this research was conducted to see the influence of duck syndrome on the psychological well-being of private university students who study while working with the mediating variable of organizational support.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ryff (2013) stated that psychological well-being is a condition where a person has the ability to accept oneself and one's life in the past, self-development, the belief that one's life is meaningful, has a purpose, has quality positive relationships with other people, the capacity to manage life in the environment effectively and the ability to determine one's own actions. Ryff and Keyes (1995) define psychological well-being as the full achievement of an individual's psychological potential and a state when an individual can accept themselves as they are, have a purpose in life, and develop positive relationships with other people.

Psychological well-being is defined as the full achievement of a person's psychological potential and a state when an individual can accept one's strengths and weaknesses as they are, have a purpose in life, develop positive relationships with other people, become an independent person, able to control the environment, and continue to grow personally (Ryff & Singer, 1996). Meanwhile, Dodge et.al. (2012) define psychological well-being as a balance between psychological, social and physical resources against challenges in life that require these resources. These challenges or obstacles in life can give rise to psychological problems or mental health problems. Duck syndrome is a mental health problem or mental fatigue faced.

Godfrey et.al (2024) explain that the term duck syndrome comes from the metaphor of a duck floating calmly on the surface of the water, but its feet move quickly below the surface to maintain its position. Akcay and Ohashi (2024) further stated that duck syndrome is a psychological phenomenon that describes the condition of a person who appears calm, controlled and successful on the surface, but behind that is struggling hard to survive. Duck Syndrome can give rise to significant psychological distress, including anxiety, emotional exhaustion and depression (Godfrey et.al, 2024). Duck syndrome can give rise to the problem of mental fatigue, namely psychological lack of well-being. High levels of duck syndrome can reduce an individual's psychological well-being.

Organizational support refers to the extent to which an organization values contributions and cares about employee well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). One of the employee welfare is psychological well-being. Organizational support is also an effort to provide appreciation, attention and increase welfare to each employee in accordance with the efforts given to the organization. Basically, organizational support is always expected by every employee. If employees feel support from the organization that is in accordance with their norms, desires and expectations, then employees will automatically be committed to fulfilling their obligations to the organization (Eisenberger, et al., 2002). Increased organizational support can improve employee psychological well-being.

Organizational support can have an impact on increasing commitment, job satisfaction and positive mood, employee work involvement, work performance, desire to stay in the organization and reduce tension at work, as well as reducing the level of withdrawal behavior, so that it can increase organizational productivity (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Robbins and Judge (2008) state that perceived organizational support is the degree to which employees believe the organization appreciates contributions and cares about employee welfare, unless management does not support employees, employees can see these tasks as something unpleasant and show ineffective work results for the organization.

Organizational support theory argues that employees develop an assessment of how much the organization values and cares for employees from various aspects, such as its recognition of employees' efforts or its willingness to meet their socioemotional needs (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Socioemotional needs that are not met or experiencing exhaustion are duck syndrome. The increase in duck syndrome experienced can reduce the level of organizational support felt by employees,

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in this case students who study while working. The following are several research hypotheses that will be revealed in the research.

H1 : Organizational support has a positive effect towards psychological well being.

H2 : Organizational support has a negative effect towards duck syndrome.

H3 : Duck syndrome has a negative effect towards psychological well-being.

H4 : Duck syndrome mediates the relationship between organizational support and psychological well being.

METHOD

In this research, researchers used quantitative methods with a non-experimental quantitative research design by investigating phenomena (Creswell, 2014). Phenomena are the basis for researchers to collect data, determine variables, then measure them with numbers to carry out an analysis according to statistical procedures. The population of this study was 183 private university students who were studying while working. This research uses saturated sampling or total sampling techniques. So 203 people in the population became the total sample or research subjects. This research tests the independent variable Duck Syndrome (X), the dependent variable Psychological Well Being (Y), and the mediating variable Organizational Support (Z). Data collection was carried out using a Likert Scale via Google Form. This statistical analysis process was carried out with Smart PLS.

The Psychological Well Being variable was measured using an instrument developed based on the six (6) dimensions of PWB according to Ryff (2013), namely self-acceptance, positive relationships with other people, autonomy, mastery of the environment, life goals, and personal growth. The reliability test results for the Psychological Well Being (*Cronbach's Alpha*) variable were 0.860 and the discrimination power ranged from 0.701-0.851. The Duck Syndrome variable was measured using an instrument developed based on the four (4) symptoms of duck syndrome referred to by Akcay and Ohashi (2024), namely emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral. The reliability test results for the Duck Syndrome variable (*Cronbach's Alpha*) were 0.873 and the discrimination power ranged from 0.703-0.842. The Organizational Support variable is measured using an instrument developed based on aspects of organizational support according to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), namely appreciation for employee contributions and attention or concern for employee welfare. The reliability test results for the Organizational Support variable (*Cronbach's Alpha*) were 0.902 and the discrimination power ranged from 0.732-0.885.

Table 1. Measurement Result

Variable	Items	Loading range	Cronbach's α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Organizational Support	12	0.732-0.885	0.902	0.910	0.632
Duck Syndrome	20	0.703-0.842	0.873	0.931	0.651
Psychological Well Being	24	0.701-0.851	0.860	0.902	0.594

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research involved participants or respondents as many as 183 students studying while working. The gender of the subject was 102 respondents, 55.74% male, and 81 respondents or 44.26% female. The work period of 183 respondents with a work period of between 3 months-1 year was 38.25%, a work period of 1-3 years was 44.81%, and a work period of >3 years was 16.94%. Next, a descriptive analysis of the data in this research was carried out. Analysis was carried out to categorize empirically statistically the variables duck syndrome, organizational support and psychological well being. Categorization of the total score is carried out using a three-level categorization which refers to categorization norms (Azwar, 2017). The research data is described in the table 2, table 3 and table 4 below.

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Table 2. Respondent Characteristic Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	102	55.74
Female	81	44.26
Total	183	100

Table 3. Respondent Characteristic Based on Tenure

Tenure	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
3 months – 1 year	70	38.25
1 year – 3 years	82	44.81
>3years	31	16.94
Total	183	100

Table 4. Categorization

Variable	Categorization	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Duck Syndrome	Low	0	0
	Moderate	84	45.90
	High	99	54.10
	Total	183	100
Psychological Well Being	Low	96	52.46
	Moderate	67	36.61
	High	20	10.93
	Total	183	100
Organizational Support	Low	70	38.25
	Moderate	75	40.98
	High	38	20.77
	Total	183	100

Table 5. Normality Test Result

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis	Interpretation
Organizational Support	-0.841	1.212	Normal
Duck Syndrome	-0.670	0.980	Normal
Psychological Well Being	-0.920	1.351	Normal

Table 5 above shows the normality test result. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values. The results indicate that all variables have skewness and kurtosis values within the acceptable range of -2 to +2. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data are approximately normally distributed and suitable for further analysis.

Table 6. Linearity Test Result

Relationship	F (Linearity)	Sig.	Remark
Organizational Support → Psychological Well Being	32.452	0.000	Linear
Organizational Support → Duck Syndrome	41.121	0.000	Linear
Duck Syndrome → Psychological Well Being	27.360	0.000	Linear

Table 6 Result shows that all relationships have significance values below 0.05, indicating that the relationships between variables are linear. Thus, the linearity assumption is satisfied. Linearity was tested to ensure that the relationships between variables follow a linear pattern.

Table 7. Multicollinearity Test Result

Predictor	Dependent Variable	VIF	Tolerance	Conclusion
Organizational Support	Psychological Well Being	1.27	0.79	No multicollinearity
Duck Syndrome	Psychological Well Being	1.33	0.77	No multicollinearity

According to the table 7 all VIF values are below the threshold of 5 and tolerance coefficient are above 0.10. The result indicates that there are no multicollinearity issues among the predictor variables.

Table 8. Structural Model Path Coefficients

Direct Path	β	T – Sta.	p values
Organizational Support → Psychological Well Being	0.488	5.42	0.001
Organizational Support → Duck Syndrome	-0.412	6.18	0.001
Duck Syndrome → Psychological Well Being	-0.307	4.52	0.001

Table 9. Mediation Analysis Test Result (Indirect Effect)

Indirect Path	β	T – Sta.	p values
Organizational Support → Duck Syndrome → Psychological Well Being	0.301	3.27	0.001

Based on the table 8 and table 9 shows that the influence of all variables has a t-calculated value of > 1.96 (for a significance value of 5%) and a p value of < 0.05 , meaning that all hypotheses are accepted and significant. The first hypothesis is accepted, organizational support has a significant positive effect on psychological well being ($\beta=0.488$). The second hypothesis is accepted, organizational support has a significant negative effect on duck syndrome ($\beta=-0.412$). The third hypothesis is accepted, duck syndrome has a significant negative effect on psychological well being ($\beta=-0.307$). The fourth hypothesis is accepted, duck syndrome mediates the organizational support variable with the psychological well being variable ($\beta=0.301$).

The research results show that organizational support has a significant positive direct influence on psychological well-being, but negatively influences duck syndrome. Duck syndrome is proven to mediate the relationship between organizational support and psychological well-being. The results of this research reveal that the higher the organizational support an individual receives, the more their psychological well-being increases. The research results also show that the lower the organizational support an individual receives, the higher the potential for duck syndrome. The low level of duck syndrome experienced means that it can improve psychological well-being.

The phenomenon of duck syndrome is relatively high in students who study while working. Student mental health is an important issue in the world of higher education, considering that the study period in higher education is a transition period full of challenges (Setyanto, 2023). In the context of duck syndrome, students studying while working tend to use surface coping, namely presenting themselves as if there are no problems, even though they are actually experiencing pressure. The results of this research are in line with and support Wiguna et.al's (2022) research that mental health is a state of well-being where individuals realize their potential, are able to overcome the stresses of normal life, work productively, and contribute to their community. Students are vulnerable to mental health problems due to academic workload, transition to independent living, financial problems, and social demands (Wiguna et.al., 2022).

Working individuals tend to make an assessment of the situation in general regarding the extent to which the organization where they work provides positive feedback for the contributions made. A supportive organization will form a relationship with employees and increased organizational support will give rise to effective work behavior (Rhoades & Eisenberg, 2002). Organizational support includes various forms of interventions and resources provided

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by the organization to assist employees in achieving their work goals and improve their overall well-being. Organizational support can take the form of emotional, informational, instructional and material support provided to employees both formally and informally.

CONCLUSION

The duck syndrome phenomenon in students indicates that academic pressure, social expectations, and the need to maintain an image of success often cause an imbalance between visible external conditions and internal psychological conditions. In particular, the phenomenon of duck syndrome in students who study while working actually shows that they are overwhelmed in carrying out study and work activities at the same time. Students tend to display an outward appearance that appears calm and successful, while internally they experience anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and can even lead to mental health problems. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that there is an influence of organizational support on psychological well being and duck syndrome, and duck syndrome also has an influence on social support and psychological well being. Organizational support has a significant positive effect on psychological well-being, the higher the organizational support an individual receives, the more psychological well-being increases and vice versa. Organizational support has a significant negative effect on duck syndrome, the weaker the organizational support an individual receives can increase the level of duck syndrome experienced, and vice versa. Duck syndrome has a significant negative effect on psychological well-being, meaning that the lower or lower the level of duck syndrome experienced, the greater the psychological well-being, and vice versa.

Based on the research results, it is also hoped that workplaces and campuses can provide supportive support to students who study while working. Hopefully, this research can provide information and knowledge for students who study and work so that they can manage and maintain their psychological well-being by accepting their own situation, building good relationships with the people around them, trying to manage environmental conditions that suit themselves, planning and carrying out useful activities for self-development.

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