

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONLINE RETAIL THERAPY WITH ANXIETY ON EMERGING ADULTHOOD

M. Ramadhana Reksoprodjo¹, Angga Adi Saputra², Balqis Nashita³, Cindy
Febriani Thalia⁴

¹(Faculty of Psychology/ Pancasila University, Indonesia)

²(Faculty of Psychology/ Pancasila University, Indonesia)

³(Faculty of Psychology/ Pancasila University, Indonesia)

⁴(Faculty of Psychology/ Pancasila University, Indonesia)

ABSTRACT : Though it is quite effective in reducing spreading virus, social distancing tends to give mental pressure due to limited in all life aspect, in the end, you could tell how bad it was social distancing to someone mental state. Shopping can be an effective way to minimize sadness, reduced anxiety, and depression. Now, especially after the pandemic, online shopping has become an effective choice for many people due to its easy access and safer activities, where there is no direct contact with anyone. The participants obtained were 102 people (43 men and 59 women), which were in the age range of 18-25 people and were divided into Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) and outside Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) domiciles. There is a significant relationship between online retail therapy and anxiety, the higher the anxiety experienced by individuals at the developmental stage of emerging adulthood, the higher the online retail therapy.

KEYWORDS:-Anxiety, Emerging Adult, Online Retail Therapy

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the announcement about coronavirus (COVID-19) by March 2020, there has been an extra attention for mental health issues, particularly anxiety and depression (Feter, et al., 2021) [1]. Research by Feter et al. in Brazil (2021), which involved more than two thousand respondent gained data that showed more than 51,3% reported increased anxiety worse than before social distancing. Same research also shows an increasing number of depression (6,6X) and severe anxiety (7,4X). Social distancing forced all activity and nonessential services such as commercial, industry, malls, schools to reduced or stopped. Even though it is quite effective in reducing spreading virus, social distancing tends to give mental pressure due to limited in all life aspect, financially, and other social activity. In the end, you could tell how bad it was social distancing to someone mental state (Feter et al., 2021).

The American Psychiatric Association (1994) describe anxiety as an anticipation for future dangerous event or negative events accompanied by dysphoria or intense physical symptoms. *The American Psychiatric Association* (2013) gave further explanation that anxiety as an emotional state that shows by extreme physical intensity, worries, and/or intense fear, and physical changes such as increased heartbeat, suffocation, nausea, and uncontrollable vomiting as a reaction to stress and worries about future state or at the moment (Tang et al., 2020) [2].

Historically, psychologist and psychiatrist divide anxiety to anxiety state and anxiety traits. What differentiate this two is duration, where anxiety state is a, acute response for potential threat, while anxiety trait shows chronic repeatedly expressed in everyday lives. The presence of excessive anxiety can trigger or increase the potential for the emergence of various more complicated health problems, such as the emergence of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which can be triggered by changes in connectivity between brain regions that affect stress and anxiety behavior (Daviu et al., 2019) [3]. Not only that, in other studies it was also found that anxiety symptoms also increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease

in the elderly (Mah et al., 2016) [4], therefore, efforts to find effective treatments for the various harmful effects of anxiety become very important.

Several previous studies have found several approaches or therapeutic methods to overcome the effects of anxiety. Physical activities and relaxation techniques can be used to help calm and maintain health (Sari, 2020) [5], such as yoga which can be used as an adjunct or combination therapy for managing stress, anxiety and depression (Butterfield et al., 2017) [6]. Shopping can be an effective way to minimize sadness. In a broader demographic study, retail, shopping and purchasing activities have been associated with reduced anxiety and depression (Atalay&Meloy, 2011) [7]. Kang (2009) [8] describes retail therapy as an activity of buying goods or shopping that is done to relieve a negative mood.

There are various forms of retail therapy, ranging from visiting shopping places, using applications on a cellphone or tablet, visiting and browsing online markets, etc. Supported by technological advances, the search for shopping activities is increasingly varied and diverse. Nowadays, shopping online has become commonplace. Based on data from the Ministry of Communication and Information (2015), as many as 77% of internet users in Indonesia search for product information and shop online. Online shopping or E-Commerce is a transaction process carried out through media or intermediaries in the form of online buying and selling sites or social networks that provide goods or services that are traded (Harahap, 2018) [9]. Now, especially after the pandemic, online shopping has become an effective choice for many people due to its easy access and safer activities, where there is no direct contact with anyone.

The variety of consumers is also increasing, but research shows that most consumers in online and offline shopping are in the development stage of emerging adulthood. Referring to Arnett (2000) [10], emerging adulthood is the stage of development when individuals are in the age range of 18 to 25 years. Statistics by the Pew Research Center (2018) show that people in the 18 to 21 age group make up the most social media users, with 88% of individuals in that age range using at least one social media platform. On the other hand, emerging adulthood has also become a force with enormous power in shaping the demand for products in the market (Workman & Studak, 2006). [11]. According to Arnett in Workman & Studak (2006), emerging adulthood is characterized by identity exploration (highly anticipating various experiences before actually taking on roles and responsibilities as adults); very high personal freedom (doing many activities without supervision); and a low level of social responsibility (not limited by responsibilities related to the role of marriage or the role of parents) (Workman & Studak, 2006).

This can be seen from how a graduate who has just graduated and is starting to look for work, they will need certain appearance criteria to support their job application process. Various anxieties arise when dealing with these situations, appearance readiness is expected to reduce the anxiety faced, and one way to achieve this readiness is by shopping for clothes and self-care to support the required appearance readiness. The need and influence of emerging adulthood is so great that in USA Today Magazine (2000), they are cited as the main trendsetters in various goods on the market, especially fashion (Workman & Studak, 2006). Not only building a career, emerging adulthood is also synonymous with its tendency to self-exploration (Arnett in Workman & Studak, 2006), and shopping can also be a way to get to know yourself better, because it includes activities to find and choose what you need or like, and decide whether to buy or not.

Various studies and previous literature confirm that various forms of therapy, including retail therapy itself can be a solution to overcome negative emotions such as anxiety. Retail therapy can have a long-lasting positive impact and can be a strategic effort to manage mood; Rick, Pereira & Burson (2014) [12]. Irwin (2018) [13] also adds that retail therapy has a significant effect on reducing residual sadness, which in his literature he also confirms that retail therapy is often used to reduce anxiety, despite some concerns related to retail therapy itself. In order to respond to this evidence, as well as how increased anxiety occurs in the developmental period of emerging adulthood, and how online shopping activities are carried out by various individuals during this pandemic, this study was also conducted to see whether there is a relationship between retail therapy carried out in this setting, online, with anxiety in emerging adults.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Lonsdale (in Pogul& Shankar, 2020) [14] defines retail therapy as an activity that can increase morale and provide a positive emotional response through shopping. Meanwhile, Schor (in Kang, 2009) defines retail therapy as a response that arises in addressing psychological problems. Retail therapy can also be interpreted as a response that appears in addressing every mood that an individual feels (Kang, 2009). In addition to expressing his opinion on the definition of retail therapy, Schor also describes people who do retail therapy. People who consume an item as a way to fight feelings of sadness, enjoy happiness, give self-esteem, increase self-esteem, or to relieve boredom. Kang (2009) defines retail therapy as a state where individuals shop to reduce negative moods. Kang (2009) also revealed that purchases made in the context of retail therapy were done spontaneously or unplanned, they also usually bought items that they initially hesitated to buy for various

reasons, but they decided to buy them as a form of "therapy" because they feel worthy to buy the item and they feel that buying the item will make their mood feel better.

With the development of digital technology and the internet, many activities that are usually done offline are becoming activities that can be done online, including shopping activities. Currently, there are many platforms that provide online shopping services. Seeing these conditions, several experts tried to specify the concept of retail therapy, which all only refers to shopping activities to shopping activities that are carried out online. This new concept is called online retail therapy. Lee & Lee (2019) [15] revealed that online retail therapy is retail therapy carried out at online shopping centers. In other words, online retail therapy is shopping activities carried out online to reduce or eliminate a bad mood.

In consumer behavior research, online retail therapy is divided into two approaches, namely the mood-alleviative consumption approach and the compensatory consumption approach (Kang, 2009). Researchers who use the mood-alleviative consumer approach usually always look at online retail therapy from the perspective of mood repair. This approach argues that a person's mood will be good when the person is shopping or consuming some goods. In other words, someone will do online retail therapy because they want to improve their mood.

Another approach is the compensatory consumption approach. Some researchers who adopt this approach assume that people who do retail therapy are the same as people who do compensatory consumption. In other words, this approach says that online retail therapy is related to shopping activities that aim to compensate oneself. One example is when a person experiences sadness and boredom in his life, then he chooses to shop to compensate for the sadness and boredom he experiences.

From some of the expert opinions that have been described above, we can draw the conclusion that anxiety is a negative emotional state that arises because the individual feels worried about things that will happen in the future, this is characterized by a somatic disorder (heart palpitations), tightness, sweating, difficulty breathing, shaking) and psychological helplessness (insecurity, feeling tense, insomnia, feeling afraid, depressed, restless, etc.)

Emerging adult is a developmental stage in which the individual in the middle is between the ages of 18 to 25 years (Arnett, 2000). Arnett (2000) states that emerging adults is a transition period when individuals can no longer be called adolescents (adolescence), but cannot yet be called young adults. One of the distinctive features of emerging adults is exploration, which has a changing impact on their lives starting from the fields of love, work, and worldview (Arnett, 2006) [16]. These changes are unpleasant, so they have an impact of instability on the lives of emerging adults (Arnett, 2006).

III. METHODOLOGY

In this study, we used individuals who are in the developmental stage of emerging adulthood as the population of this study. The sample used in this study were individuals aged 18-25 years (at the developmental stage of emerging adulthood) and had shopped online. The data collection method we used was a questionnaire distributed online. The questionnaire itself is a data collection method in which it uses a checklist and research scale. The online retail therapy measuring instrument used in this study is the online retail therapy measuring instrument developed by Minjeong (Kang, 2009). This measuring instrument consists of 22 items in which there are 4 dimensions, namely therapeutic shopping motivation (there are 6 items), therapeutic shopping value: positive reinforcement (there are 6 items), therapeutic shopping value: negative mood reduction (there are 5 items), and therapeutic shopping outcomes (there are 5 items).

The Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) measuring instrument developed by Beck, Epstein, Brown, and Steer (1988) was used to look at aspects of anxiety. This measuring instrument consists of 21 items using four Likert scales, namely 0 which states "no anxiety", 1 which states "low level", 2 which states "moderate level", 3 which states "severe level". The higher the individual's score, the higher the individual's anxiety.

In addition, the validity and reliability of BAI also has good numbers, namely validity of .94 and good reliability of .67.

IV. RESULT

The participants obtained were 102 people (43 men and 59 women), which were in the age range of 18-25 people and were divided into Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) and outside Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) domiciles.

Based on the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test, it is known that the online retail therapy variables ($W(70) = 0.721$, $p < 0.05$) and anxiety ($W(70) = 0.660$, $p < 0.05$) are not normally distributed. Therefore, it will be continued with the Phi correlation test.

Table 1.1 *Shapiro-Wilk Test*

	Online Retail Therapy	Anxiety
Df	102	102

Test Statistic	0.730	0.652
Asymp. sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000

Based on the results of the phi correlation test, we found that there was a significant relationship between online retail therapy and anxiety in individuals who were in the developmental stage of emerging adulthood ($r\Phi = 0.371$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 1.2 Phi. Correlation Testing

	Value	Sig.
Online Retail Therapy - Anxiety	0.371	0.007

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the hypothesis testing and data analysis that we have done, we found that there is a significant relationship between online retail therapy and anxiety. This shows that the higher the anxiety experienced by individuals at the developmental stage of emerging adulthood, the higher the online retail therapy. This result is in line with what was stated by Kang (2009). Kang (2009) stated that retail therapy is a shopping activity that can be done to relieve bad moods, including anxiety. In addition, these results also strengthen the opinion of Lee & Yoo (2021) [17] which states that retail therapy that is carried out both online and offline is able to bring a good mood and reduce a bad mood.

In addition to finding that online retail therapy has a significant relationship with anxiety, we also found some interesting things from this study. The first thing that is interesting is that we found that there was no significant difference in the level of online retail therapy performed by men and women. We found that there were 46.51% of men with a high online retail therapy predicate and 47.46% women with a high online retail therapy predicate as well. This finding can refute the argument that women shop more than men.

We also found that individuals who live outside Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) have more high marks in online retail therapy (as much as 53.33%) compared to individuals who live in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) (as many as 42.11%). We also found that the Sundanese have many individuals with a high online retail therapy predicate, as many as 55.56%. We also found that all participants (three in total) who came from the Bugis tribe had a high online retail therapy predicate.

From this study, we also found some unique facts about anxiety. We found that 1 in 7 individuals who live in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) have a high level of anxiety. We also found that 1 in 15 individuals outside Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) had high anxiety. In terms of age, we found that individuals in the age range of 24-25 years had high levels of anxiety as much as 15%. When compared by gender, it was found that women with a high level of anxiety experienced more (11.86%) than men (9.30%).

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