

Identifying Students' Coping Strategies In Dealing With Academic Stress At Sintuwu Maroso University

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to find out students' coping strategies in dealing with academic stress at Sintuwu Maroso University Poso. This type of research uses a quantitative survey method through Google Forms. The subjects of this study is active students in 2024, the number of the students is 47. The data is collected by distributing questionnaire links to each English Teacher in English Study Program. The results of this study indicate that on the subscale Self Distraction, the subjects are used to doing other activities to switch their minds from the problem they have, such as watching TV, sleeping, reading, or shopping (82.71%). On the subscale Religion, most subjects (80.85%) often find comfort in their religion by praying or meditating. Of course, the subjects are Indonesian, so Indonesians highly uphold religious values. On the subscale Acceptance, the subjects already accept and try to live with reality (80.59%). For the Active Coping (77.93%), shows that the subjects take action and try to focus on their efforts and make the situation better. For the Positive reframing (75.53%), the subjects try positive thinking when facing the situation. For the Planning (74.47%), when dealing with a situation, the subjects think hard about what to do next and make a strategy to face the situation they are in. Using Instrumental Support (71.01%), the subjects seek help or advice from others to improve the situation. The 7 subscales explained above show that six subscales in the adaptive category were Religion, Acceptance, Active Coping, Positive Reframing, Planning, and Using Instrumental Support. Only one subscale, self-distraction, is in the maladaptive category.

Keywords: *Coping Strategy, Academic Stress, Coping Subscale, Adaptive, Maladaptive*

1. INTRODUCTION

Embarking in an academic career is a pleasurable and exciting experience for many people. For many students, however, the transition to university may prove far more stressful than exciting. Leaving home for the first time, taking examinations, writing term papers, and all other requirements of academia is immensely stressful for many students.

In today's world, stress is everywhere; it is like a built-in feature of modern life. Stress that occurs in an academic or school environment is known as academic stress. College students commonly experience academic stress. Earning high grades is a source of stress that affects their ability to succeed in making good impressions on their parents, classmates, and significant others, and failures become pressures that come from intrapersonal, interpersonal, academic, and environmental stressors. This is proven based on research conducted by Tungka & Tarinje with the title "*Gambaran Mental Mahasiswa Selama Pembelajaran Online dimasa Pandemi Covid-19*" and the result was the students experienced moderate depression, very severe anxiety, and very severe stress.

Since not all students can cope with the stressors mentioned above, they experience academic stress. In these situations, coping strategies are necessary when dealing with stress and accompanying stressors. Coping can be understood as a process that is key in managing stress. In this process, the individual makes a cognitive and behavioral effort to manage both external and internal sources of stress.

The researcher considers coping strategies essential for students because they can help them understand how to overcome academic stress, reducing the negative impact of the coping strategies. This will affect their mental health and academic performance. This research can raise awareness among the students and teachers, lecturers, and even their parents.

Based on the background described above, the researcher is interested in conducting research about "**Identifying Students' Coping Strategies in Dealing with Academic Stress at Sintuwu Maroso University.**" By the formulation of the problem above, the objective of this research is to identify students' coping strategies in dealing with academic stress at Sintuwu Maroso University

2. METHOD

This research design uses quantitative research, and the type of research carried out is a survey. The research was conducted at the University of Sintuwu Maroso which is located at Jl. P. Timor No. 1 Gebang Rejo, Poso City. This research used a type of convenience sample. The sample in this research is active students in 2024, with a total of 47 students at the English Language Education Study Program Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Sintuwu Maroso University who were willing to participate in this research. In order to acquire accurate data, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire consists of 28 statements related to the way that the students cope with their stress.

Also, this research adopts adaptive and maladaptive theory from aruttha Norphun, M.D., Jarurin Pitanupong, M.D., Aimorn Jiraphan, M.D (2020) which was the theory originally from Barbara C. Moore, Ph.D., David E. Biegel, Ph.D., Thomas J. McMahon, Ph.D., (2011). In the stress-coping model, specific coping behaviors are understood as predominantly adaptive or maladaptive. Adaptive coping strategies are: active coping, planning, positive reframing, acceptance, humor, religion, using emotional support, and using instrumental support. Whereas, maladaptive coping strategies include: self-distraction, denial, venting negative emotions, substance use, behavioral disengagement, and self-blame.

Table 1 Blueprint Questionnaire of Brief Cope

| No | Subscale | Total Number |
|----|----------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Active coping | 2 |
| 2 | Planning | 2 |
| 3 | Positive reframing | 2 |
| 4 | Acceptance | 2 |
| 5 | Humor | 2 |
| 6 | Religion | 2 |
| 7 | Using emotional support | 2 |
| 8 | Using instrumental support | 2 |
| 9 | Self-distraction | 2 |
| 10 | Denial | 2 |
| 11 | Venting | 2 |
| 12 | Substance use | 2 |
| 13 | Behavioral disengagement | 2 |
| 14 | Self-blame | 2 |

Brief Cope (Carver, 1997)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were 28 statements contained in the questionnaire and answered by 47 students. The researcher found that the instrument has 10 items that were invalid and 3 subscales that could not used which are "Substance use", "Behavioral disengagement", and "Self-blame". The researcher decided not to use it and had to modify the instrument to 18 items and 11 subscales

Table 2 Demographic of the Respondents

| Class 2020-2022 | | Percentage | |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Semester | Respondents | | (%) |
| 2 | 2 | 4,3% | |
| 4 | 11 | 24% | |
| 6 | 21 | 43,5% | |
| 8 | 13 | 28,3% | |
| N | 47 | 100% | |
| Gender | Male | 7 | 14.9% |
| | Female | 40 | 85.2% |
| N | 47 | 100% | |

Based on Table 2 above, it can be seen that the respondent were dominated by female students in semester 4 to 8. Based on the findings above, the researcher used a questionnaire answer to determine the students' coping strategies and categorize the statement. The statement above can be categorized in the table below

Table 3 The subscale of coping strategies based on the results of the questionnaire

| Subscale | | |
|--|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Active coping | Average | Mean |
| (2) I've been concentrating my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in (78,72%) | 77,93% | 3,12 |
| (7) I've been taking action to try to make the situation better (77,13%) | | |
| 2. Planning | | |
| (14) I've been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do (72,87%) | 74,47% | 2,98 |
| (25) I've been thinking hard about what steps to take (76,06%) | | |
| 3. Positive reframing | | |
| (12) I've been trying to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive (76,06%) | 75,53% | 3,02 |
| (17) I've been looking for something good in what is happening (75%) | | |
| 4. Acceptance | | |
| (20) I've been accepting the reality of the fact that it has happened (78,72%) | 80,59% | 3,22 |
| (24) I've been learning to live with it (82,45%) | | |
| 5. Humor | | |
| (18) I've been making jokes about it (49,47%) | 52,66% | 2,11 |
| (28) I've been making fun of the situation (55,85%) | | |
| 6. Religion | | |
| (22) I've been trying to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs (79,26%) | 80,85% | 3,23 |
| (27) I've been praying or meditating (82,45%) | | |
| 7. Using emotional support | | |
| (5) I've been getting emotional support from others (62,23%) | 62,50% | 2,50 |
| (15) I've been getting comfort and understanding from someone (62,77%) | | |
| 8. Using instrumental support | | |
| (23) I've been trying to get advice or help from other people about what to do (71,81%) | 71,01% | 2,84 |
| (10) I've been getting help and advice from other people (70,21%) | | |
| 9. Self-distraction | | |
| (1) I've been turning to work or other activities to take my mind off things (80,85%) | 82,71% | 3,31 |
| (19) I've been doing something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping (84,57%) | | |
| 10. Denial | | |
| (3) I've been saying to myself "This isn't real" (46,81%) | 45,74% | 1,83 |
| (8) I've been refusing to believe that it has happened (44,68%) | | |
| 11. Venting | | |
| (21) I've been expressing my negative feelings (53,72%) | 60,37% | 2,41 |
| (9) I've been saying things to let my unpleasant feelings escape (67,02%) | | |

From Table 3, 7 subscales have a high average, which is selfdistraction, Religion, Acceptance, Active Coping, Positive Reframing, Planning, and Using Instrumental Support. On subscale Self Distraction, the subjects are used to doing other activities to switch their mind from the problem that the subjects have such as watching TV, sleeping, reading, or going shopping (82,71%). On the subscale Religion, most of the subjects (80,85%) often to find their comfort in their religion by praying or meditating. Of course, the subjects are Indonesian, so Indonesian people highly uphold religious values. On the subscale Acceptance, the subjects already accept the reality and try to live with it (80,59%). Active Coping (77,93%), shows that the subjects taking action and trying to focus on their effort and make the situation better. Positive reframing (75,53%), the subjects are trying to positive thinking when facing the situation. Planning (74,47%), when dealing with a situation, the subjects think hard about what to do next and make a strategy to face the situation they are in. Using Instrumental Support (71,01%), the subjects seek help or advice from other people to make the situation better.

On the 7 subscales explained above, show that 6 subscales in adaptive category it was Religion, Acceptance, Active Coping, Positive Reframing, Planning, and Using Instrumental Support. Only 1 subscale which is self- distraction that in the maladaptive category. Which mean, most of the subjects coping strategies is adaptive coping. These findings was related from studies by Naruttha Norphun, M.D., Jarurin Pitanupong, M.D., Aimorn Jiraphan, M.D.

The findings was: Coping strategies frequently performed by medical students were adaptive types; acceptance, active coping, positive reframing and maladaptive types; self-distraction. Whereas maladaptive types; denial and substance use were coping strategies that medical students did not perform at all.

4. CONCLUSION

To deal with stress, the subjects often pray or meditate to clear their mind, and with that, the subjects can accept reality and try to live with it in their college life. Furthermore, the subjects take action and focus on their efforts to improve the situation. The subjects strive to maintain a positive mindset when facing challenges. When dealing with difficulties, they carefully consider their next steps and develop a strategy to handle the circumstances they are in. Additionally, the subjects seek help or advice from others to find better solutions. This means that the students' coping strategies at Sintuwu Maroso University are Adaptive Coping.

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