

Relationship Between Optimism and Stress Coping on Students who are Completing the Thesis

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Abstract: *Currently there are still final year students who tend to avoid and cannot complete the thesis on time due to some pressure or problems faced. Efforts to overcome existing stresses are called stress coping which can be influenced by the optimism that students have. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of optimism with stress coping in students who were completing their thesis. The sample of this study is the UMN Alwashliyah Teaching and Education Faculty student study program Teacher Education - Early Childhood Education which is completing a thesis totaling 56 people taken using random sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using two scales, namely optimism scale (Seligman) and stress coping (Lazarus and Folkman). Data analysis method used is Pearson Product Moment and regression analysis. The results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between optimism and stress coping in students who were completing a thesis ($R = 0.771$; $p < 0.005$). Donations given optimism for coping stress are 59.5%.*

Keywords: Optimism, Coping stress, Students

1. Background

Students who are pursuing tertiary education will be required to complete their studies within a predetermined period of time. Either the demands of parents who want to see their sons and daughters get a degree that they can be proud of, demands from the academic side, encouragement from friends, lecturers, and desires from themselves (Santrock, 2003).

The last stage in the lecture period is the completion of the final project or thesis. Thesis is a scientific essay that must be written by students as part of the final requirements of academic education (Yulianto, 2008). For students, it turns out that the thesis assignment is a task that is not light. Students initially have a high level of enthusiasm, motivation and interest in the thesis, but the situation decreases with the difficulties experienced. Not a few students complained when they wrote their thesis. Complaints are one of the symptoms that indicate stress in the complaining person.

Based on the interviews of researchers with several UMN Al Washliyah Faculty of Teaching and Education students, there were known problems or problems related to the completion of the thesis making, including difficulties in dealing with supervisors, difficulties in finding literature / references / data, difficulties in determining titles, ability in making writing, lack of mastery of research methodology or concepts, ability to operate computers, health, and time sharing (for students studying while working or following organizations). The problem or problem is a stressor that can burden students who are preparing their thesis.

This burdensome condition is called stress. Lazarus and Folkman (in Sarafino, 2011) say that stress is an internal state that can be caused by physical demands from the body or environmental and social conditions that are considered potentially harmful, uncontrolled or exceed the ability of individuals to overcome them.

The existence of differences in the impact of stress on students can be influenced by differences in the personality characteristics of each student, one of which is optimism. The difference in the level of optimism in students will determine the student's response to the source of stress, so that the student's response can be different on the stimulus that is the same source of stress. This will affect the behavior of students in overcoming the obstacles or problems faced in preparing the thesis (Santrock, 2003).

Decrease in stress can be overcome by coping, this is caused by the emergence of unpleasant feelings due to not achieving goals. Lazarus and Folkman (in Sarafino, 2011) argued that coping is an individual conscious effort to manage a situation that suppresses or the intensity of events that are responded to as a stressful situation.

Lazarus (1995) further explained that the use of coping depends on one's expectations and beliefs on the stressor, namely optimism. The hope of a person can direct his thoughts on positive actions or build positive expectations that can overcome obstacles or problems that are being experienced. Optimism encourages individuals to always think that something that happens is the best thing for themselves. This optimism will help a person to overcome obstacles that arise in achieving the goals or targets of an individual (Seligman, 1992).

Optimistic students can see with a positive perspective when facing problems or difficulties so they feel confident of having the power to control their world. If the student faces obstacles in the thesis preparation process then the student will continue to try to face these obstacles until the problem is resolved.

Students who have low optimism cannot see with a positive perspective of the problems or difficulties they face in compiling a thesis such as being dominated by negative feelings and the students feel that there is no support and do not want to move or motivate themselves so that they feel unsure that they have the power to control their world. If the

student faces obstacles in the process of preparing the student's thesis, it will easily give up and avoid these obstacles.

If the student has positive beliefs and expectations, he will assume the problem can be solved so he will choose the problem of focus coping in solving the problem by taking direct action to reduce the problem in completing the thesis. In other words, students who have high optimism tend to use problem focus coping in solving problems related to thesis making.

Based on the background of the problem and observation on students who are completing their thesis in the Al Washliyah Teaching and Education Faculty, the researchers are interested in conducting research related to the relationship of optimism with stress coping for students who are completing their thesis.

Coping stress

Aldwin and Revenson (in Sarafino, 2011) suggested indicators of stress coping strategies developed from Lazarus and Folkman theories, namely:

a. Problem focused coping

Indicators that are oriented to this strategy are:

- 1) Instrumental action (direct action)
Individuals do business that directs to solving problems directly and devises plans to act and implement them.
- 2) Cautiousness
Individuals think, review and consider several alternative solutions to problems, be careful in deciding problems, asking for other people's opinions and evaluating the strategies that are applied later.
- 3) Negotiation (negotiation)
Individuals discuss and seek solutions with other people involved in the hope that problems can be resolved.

Emotion Focused Coping

Indicators that are oriented to this strategy are:

- 1) Escapism (escape from problems)
- 2) Minimization (ease the burden of the problem)
- 3) Self blame (self blame)
- 4) Seeking meaning (seeking meaning)

In this study, only using the problem focused coping aspect.

2. Literature Review

1) Definition of Stress Coping

According to Lazarus & Folkman (in Sarafino, 2011) coping stress is all individual efforts to regulate environmental demands and conflicts that arise, reducing discrepancies / gaps in perception between demands of situations that suppress the individual's ability to meet these demands.

Factors that influence stress coping

- a) Physical health
- b) Positive belief / optimism
- c) Problem solving skills
- d) Social skills
- e) Social support
- f) Material

2) Understanding Optimism

Optimism is thinking positively and expecting positive results, having confidence, and trying to explore the best in itself and expecting the best results from a situation. Feist and Feist (2010) define as a habit of positive thinking, a positive and realistic way of looking at a problem. Positive thinking is a form of thinking that strives to achieve the best results from the worst.

3) Aspects of Optimism

Individual style of explanation is related to optimism consisting of three aspects (Seligman, 1992), namely:

- a) Permanence: related to time, which is temporary and permanent. A pessimistic person will explain the failure or event that is suppressed permanently or permanently. Conversely, an optimistic person will see an unpleasant event as something that happens temporarily.
- b) Pervasiveness (global-specific): relating to the dimensions of scope, differentiated into specific and universal. Pessimists will express a mindset in dealing with unpleasant events in a universal way, while people who are optimistic in a specific way.
- c) Personalization (internal-external): related to the source of the cause, internal, and external. The optimistic person views the pressing problem from the environment (external) and sees the fun event coming from within him (internal). Conversely, pessimistic people perceive pressing problems to be sourced from within (internal) and consider success as a result of situations outside themselves (external).

3. Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with correlational methods. Samples used in this study are UMN students of early childhood education teacher study programs who are completing a thesis amounting to 56 students using Random Sampling sampling technique. Data collection is done using a scale of coping stress and optimism behavior.

Scale Validity and Reliability

Scale	Item validity (rxy)	Reliability (α)
Coping stress	0,301–0,581	0,869
Optimism	0,308–0,570	0, 819

This study processes data using simple regression analysis techniques in processing research data that previously passed assumptions such as normality and linearity testing.

Research Results and Discussion

Hypothesis: Relationship of Optimism with Stress Coping

Simple regression test results

RX1.Y	R ²	P	Conclusion
0,771	0,595	0,000	Have a correlation

Based on the table above, it is known that R is 0.771, this shows a strong relationship between optimism variables and stress coping. R2 value of 0.595 means that optimism has a contribution of 27.6% in explaining stress coping and (sig) p <0.05; means the correlation is significant. So the hypothesis

is accepted: optimism has a significant positive relationship with stress coping in students who are completing a thesis.

Research Data Score Categorization

Variable	SD	Mean		Inform
		Empirical	Hypothetical	
Coping stress	9,2	91,6	77,5	good
Optimism	7,3	72,6	60	High

Based on the comparison of the two average values above (mean hypothetical and empirical mean) and categorization of research variables, it can be stated that this research subject has high optimism and has good coping stress.

If the student has positive beliefs and expectations, he will assume the problem can be solved so he will choose the problem of focus coping in solving the problem by taking direct action to reduce the problem in completing the thesis. In other words, students who have high optimism tend to use problem focus coping in solving problems related to thesis making.

Conversely, students who are less optimistic in writing their thesis cannot see a positive perspective of the problems or difficulties they face in compiling a thesis such as being dominated by negative feelings and the students feel that there is no support and do not want to move or motivate themselves so feel uncertain that they have the power to control their world. If the student faces obstacles in the process of preparing the thesis then he will easily give up and avoid these obstacles.

The results of this study are also in line with the results of research related to optimism and stress coping conducted by Hanik (2013) who found that the problem of focus coping can reduce student stress when completing the thesis. Problem focus coping can also help students to be more effective in completing their thesis as much as 54.5%, which means that the use of focus coping problems in thesis students can help solve problems encountered when completing a thesis. According to Mariyanti (2015) students can overcome obstacles and stressors when working on a thesis using the problem of coping focus.

4. Discussion

Based on the results of the study it was found that optimism has a relationship with stress coping in UMN Al Washliyah Early Childhood Education students who completed the thesis. This is in accordance with the opinion of Lazarus (1995) which explains the use of coping depends on how a person's expectations and beliefs about the stressor are optimism.

Hope someone can direct his thoughts on positive actions or build positive expectations that can overcome obstacles or problems that are being experienced. Optimism encourages individuals to always think that something that happens is the best thing for themselves. This optimism will help a person to overcome obstacles that arise in achieving the goals or targets of an individual (Seligman, 1992).

Based on the results of data analysis also obtained the coefficient of determination (R^2) the optimism variable is 0.595. This indicates that optimism contributes 59.5% in explaining stress coping to students who are finishing their thesis. The results of the contributions obtained from data analysis indicate that there are other factors of 40.5% which affect stress coping in addition to optimism. Other factors that influence coping stress include self-esteem, self-confidence, social support, and so on (Baron, 2003).

5. Conclusions and Suggestion

Conclusion

- 1) There is a significant positive relationship between optimism and coping stress, the proposed hypothesis is accepted. This means that the higher the optimism, the better the stress coping of students who are completing the thesis. Conversely, the lower the optimism, the worse the stress coping students have who are finishing their thesis. This is indicated by the correlation coefficient of 0.771 where $p < 0.05$. The contribution given by the optimism variable is 59.5% for stress coping for students who are completing their thesis.
- 2) The level of optimism that students have in Teacher Education - Early Childhood Education Nusantara Muslim University which is completing the thesis is in the high category.
- 3) Student stress coping levels Teacher Education - Early Childhood Education Nusantara Muslim University which is completing the thesis is in a good category.

Suggestion

- 1) For other researchers who are interested in doing research on optimism and stress coping, you should consider including other variables that are thought to affect stress coping such as social support, self-confidence, self-esteem, conformity, etc. Further research is expected to expand the research area so that it can obtain results that can be generalized more broadly.
- 2) In addition, the surrounding environment of students can work together to support students in order to have high optimism so that they can solve problems when doing thesis.

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