

Factor that Affecting Academic Stress and the Correlation with the Coping Strategy of International Students at Northeast Normal University, China

Fatmawati¹, Ahmad Fawad Sharifi², Ghuzel Kharunova³

¹Ph. D Student, Faculty of Education, Northeast Normal University, China
fatmawati[at]staff.gunadarma.ac.id

²Master Student, School of Psychology, Northeast Normal University, China
Fawadsharifi6[at]gmail.com

³Master Student, Psychology and pedagogy, Bashkirian State Pedagogical University, Russia
Kharunovaguzel[at]gmail.com

Abstract: *The study was conducted to investigate the factor are affecting the academic stress and their coping strategy of the international students in Northeast Normal University China. There are two instruments of questionnaires used in this study. The first instruments are Kohn and Frazer (1986) Academic Stress Scale (ASS), 37 items with 5 scale likers. The second instrument is Xie (1998) Simplified Coping Style Questionnaire (SCSQ), 20 items with 4 scale likers. The data analyzed by descriptive statistics, independent t-test, and ANOVA. A total of 84 international students contributed to different demographics like gender, faculty, study program, and continent. The result shows that there is no significant difference between gender with females ($M=2.95$, $SD=.492$) and male ($M=2.90$, $SD=.632$). For the academic stress factor, Class situation factor ($M=3.13$, $SD=.761$) get the highest average score, and Class speaking factor ($M=2.63$, $SD=.856$) get the lowest average score. The coping strategy result shows that be positive to get the highest average and do other activities get the lowest average score.*

Keywords: Stress, academic stress, coping strategy, international students

1. Introduction

Education system today has developed and has contributed greatly to the development of the world and also now everybody has equal access to the international world, it can be seen by the increasing number of international students enrolling in universities abroad. According to Gang, Wei and Jing-Lin (2009), rapidly growing country attract more International students on the past two decades. China, which succeeded in becoming a developed country in a relatively short period, has made many international students are interested in studying in China. According to the Chinese Ministry of Education (2018), a total of 492,185 international students studying in China and coming from 196 countries. Those international students come from the different continents which are: Asia (59.95%), Africa (16.57%), Europe (14.96%), America (7.26%), and Oceania (1.27%).

Living in a different country means that many people will come into contact with the multi-cultural environment and the internalization and globalization break the border of differences in culture. For this reason, people are pushed to interact and communicate with a multi-cultural situation and with the host culture itself. This situation will cause a problem because different people with different backgrounds will show a different way of reacting to particular situation. (Tamam, 2010; Cushner and Brislin,

1996). The biggest issue of international students is to build a new social network in the host country, Chun Cao, Chang Zhu, Qian Meng (2018). This continues to make some international students have stress. Masih and Gulrez (2006) stated that Stress as a crisis of lifestyles. Those stress according to Banerjee and Chatterjee (2016) affecting individual developmental stages. For the international students' that studies abroad, their stressor effects by academic stress. Academic stress can explain as a student's interactions of environmental stressors, cognitive appraisal and coping with the academic-related stressors, and psychological response to the stressors (Lee & Larson, 2000; Lou & Chi, 2000). Academic stress is a problem across countries, cultures, and ethnic groups. (Wong, Wong, & Scott, 2006). The universal academic stressor can be categorized as Examinations, excessive homework, time issues, and peer competition (Cheng, Leong, & Geist, 1993) Huang (2000) identified a six-dimensional coping structure: problem-solving, seeking support, withdrawal, catharsis, imaging, and endurance. Li and Zhang (2004) examined students' daily stressful life events in middle school and found a 4-dimensional coping structure: active problem solving, internal-passive appraisal, external-passive appraisal, and social support.

Stress associated with academic activities have been linked to poor academic performance (e.g., Clark & Rieker, 1986; Linn & Zeppa, 1984) and anxiety (e.g., Aldwin &

Volume 9 Issue 9, September 2020

www.ijsr.net

Licensed Under Creative Commons Attribution CC BY

Greenberger, 1987). Chun Cao, Chang Zhu, Qian Meng (2018), Five subscales that affect the academic stressors are competency-related challenges; learning style challenges; academic resources challenge; communication barriers; pressure; and social support challenges. Major difficulties due to preparing essay type assignment, related to working with a second language, university life and study was not what the students expected and family had high expectations and not aware of the challenges that face by the students.

Parta and Kimb (2018) indicated that adolescents who adapted more coping skills reported have higher levels of psychological adjustment. The two categories of academic stress-coping response: positive solving and maladaptive coping strategies. Positive problem-solving means working on a problem and remaining healthy, maladaptive stress coping is engaged in deviant and/or negative leisure activities.

1.1 Research objective

- 1) To find out factors that affect the academic stress score of international students
- 2) To find out the international student preferable coping strategy
- 3) To find out the correlation between students’ academic stress factor and the coping strategy.

1.2 Research question

- 1) What factors affect the academic stress of international students?
- 2) What is the coping strategy that adapted by the international students?
- 3) What is the correlation between students’ academic stress factor and the coping strategy?

2. Method

Quantitative methods research method is employed for this research to investigate the Factor That Affecting Academic Stress and The Correlation with The Coping Strategy of International Students in Northeast Normal University, China.

2.1 Population

International students of Northeast Normal University, with different demographical such as: gender, faculty, and continent . The research target is 100 International students with English taught major.

2.2 Sample and sampling

Purpose sampling is use, from 100 questionnaire 84 finish the questionnaire with 7 incomplete and 9 did not return the questionnaire. From eight faculty, later will be divided into two group stated as Science and Non sciences faculty.

2.3 Data collection instrument

- Adapted ACADEMIC STRESS SCALE (ASS, Kohn & Frazer, 1986), 37 items 5 likers (1=not at all-2=rarely-3=sometimes-4=fairly-4=extremely)
- Adopted SIMPLIFIED COPING STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCSQ; Xie, 1998), 20 items 4 likers (1=never-2=occasionaly-3=often-4=always)

2.4 Data analysis

The data analysis will be using SPSS tool and the analysis will use Descriptive statistic to shows how many respondents that contributed and based on their gender, faculty, continent and study program, Independent T-Test and ANOVA will show factor that affecting the International students’ Academic stress and to show what is the Coping strategy that adapted by them. It also will show the correlation between the group with the level of stress and their coping

3. Result

There 100 international students of Northeast Normal University were chosen by purpose sample size in this research. 84 complete questionnaires were collected and used for examining the study. The first part will show the demographic information of respondent.

Table 1: Gender of participants
Gender of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	34	40.5	40.5	40.5
	Female	50	59.5	59.5	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 presented that 34 (40,5 %) of the respondents are female and 50 (59,5%) of the respondents are male. More male participated in the study.

Table 2: Continent of participants
Continent of participant

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Asia	51	6.7	60.7	60.7
	Africa	18	21.4	21.4	82.1
	South America	2	2.4	2.4	84.5
	Europe	13	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 presented that 51 (60.7%) of the respondents are Asian, 18 (21.4%) of the respondents are African, 2 (2.4%) of the respondents are South American and 13(15.5%) of the respondents are European. Majority of the respondents are from Asia

Table 3: Faculty of participant

Faculty of participant

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sciences	36	42.9	42.9	42.9
	Social Sciences	48	57.1	57.1	75.5
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 presented that 36 (42.9%) of the respondents from Sciences faculty and 48 (57.1%) of the respondents from social sciences faculty. It shows that majority of the respondents are from social sciences.

Table 4: Study program of participants

Study Program of participant

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor	13	15.5	15.5	15.5
	Master	50	59.5	59.5	75.5
	PhD	21	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 presented that 13 (15,5%) of participants are Bachelor degree students, 50 (59,5%) of participants are Master degree students and 21(25%) are PhD degree students.It is indicated that more Master degree students participated.

Table 5: Factor of academic stress

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Assignment	84	1	5	3.06	.814
Class Speaking	84	1	5	2.63	.856
Lecture	84	1	5	2.85	.642
Class Situation	84	1	5	3.13	.761
Stress Core	84	1	5	2.92	.577
Valid N (listwise)	84				

Table 5 presenting that according to the average item mean value of the 5 scales,

The score of the Class situation factor (M=3.13, SD=.761) gets the highest average score. The score of Assignment factor (M=3.06, SD=.814). The score of the Lecture factor (M=2.86, SD=.642). The score of Class speaking factor (M=2.63, SD=.856) gets the lowest average score.

The mean value of 2 factors over 3 and 2 other factors nearly

3. The overall stress score is 2,92 nearly 3 it means students have

Table 6: Stress score based on the gender

Group Statistics

	Gender of Participant	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Stress Score	Female	34	2.93	.492	.084
	Male	50	2.90	.632	.089

Table 6 presented that female stress score is higher than the male, with female (M=2.95, SD=.492) and male (M=2.90, SD=.632)

Table 7: Stress score based on the faculty

Group Statistics

	Faculty of Participant	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Stress Score	Sciences	36	2.93	.517	.086
	Social Sciences	48	2.91	.623	.090

Table 7 presented that sciences faculty stress score is higher than the social sciences, with sciences (M= 2.93, SD=.517) and social sciences (M=2.91, SD=.623).

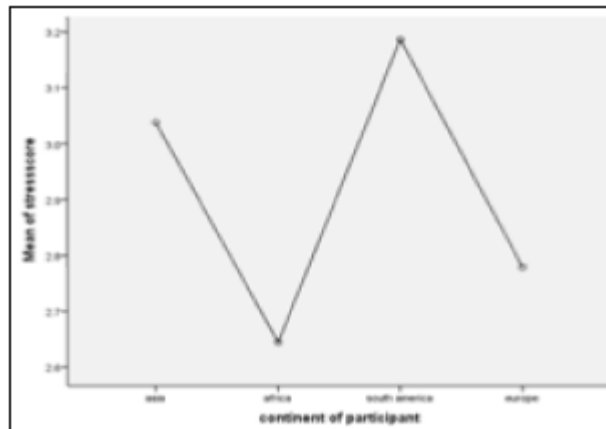


Chart 1: Stress score based on the continent of participants

Chart 1 presented that South America has highest stress score with M= 3.2 then followed by Asia M=3.05 then Europe M= 2,73 and the lowest is Africa M= 2.65.

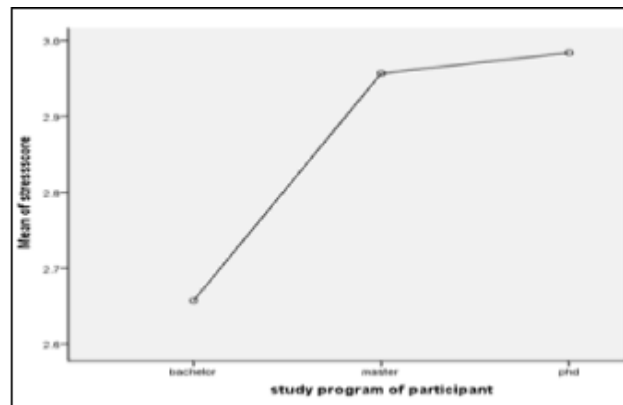


Chart 2: Stress score based on the study program of participants

Chart 2 presented that PhD degree has highest stress score with M= 3.0 then followed by Master degree M=2.9 and the lowest is Bachelor degree M= 2.64.

Table 8: Coping strategy score

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Do other activity	84	3	12	7.02	1.797
Peer support	84	6	15	9.67	2.102
Be positive	84	6	16	12.33	2.294
Reflect	84	7	16	11.65	2.331
Don't care	84	6	20	12.40	3.038
Coping Strategy Score	84	38	70	53.08	6.965
Valid N (listwise)	84				

Table 8 presented that According to the average item mean value of the 4 scales,

The score of being positive (M=12.33, SD=2.294) with a maximum of 16 and a minimum of 4 get the highest average score. The score reflects (M=11.65, SD=2.331) with a maximum of 16 and a minimum of 4. The score of don't care (M=12.40, SD=3.038) with a maximum of 20 and a minimum of 5. The score of peer support (M=9.67, SD=2.102) with a maximum of 16 and a minimum of 4. The score of doing other activity (M=7.02, SD=1.797) with maximum 12 and minimum 3 get the lowest average score the overall coping strategy score (M=53.08, SD=6.965) with a maximum of 80 and a minimum of 20, with 50 as the middle. This is indicated that International Students actively adapted Coping Strategy

Table 9: Coping strategy score based on the gender of participants

Group Statistics

	Gender of Participant	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Coping Strategy Score	Female	34	51.47	7.716	1.323
	Male	50	54.18	6.249	.884

Table 9 presented that male has higher score of coping strategy compare with the female with female (M=51.47, SD= 7.716) and male (M=54.18, SD=6.249)

Table 10: Coping strategy score based on the faculty.

Group Statistics

	Faculty of Participant	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error Mean
Coping Strategy Score	Sciences	36	53.64	7.076	1.179
	Social Sciences	48	52.67	6.926	1.000

Table 10 presented that respondent from sciences faculty (M=53.64, SD=7.076) has higher score that the respondent from the social sciences (M=52.67, SD=6.962) respondent.

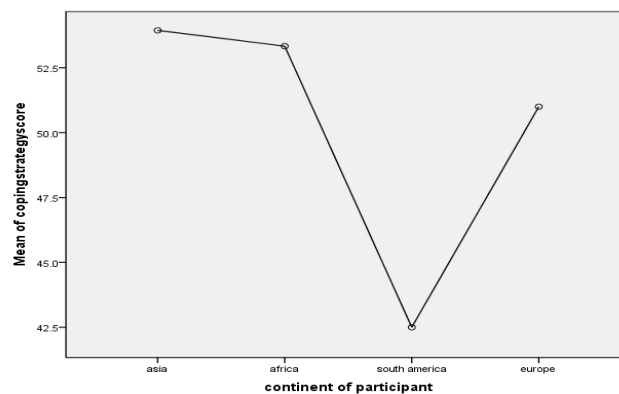


Chart 3: Coping strategy score based on the continent of participants

Chart 3 presented that respondent from Asia has highest score of coping strategy.

With Asia (M=53.94, SD= 6.898), followed by Africa (M=53.33, SD=6.117) then Europe (M=51.00, SD=6.965), and the lowest one is South America (M=42.50, SD=.707)

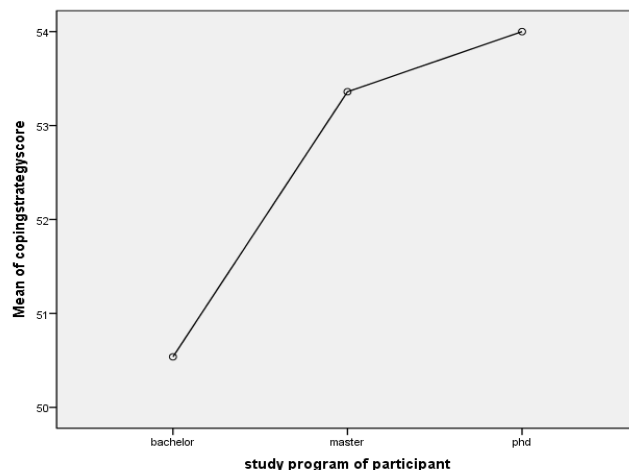


Chart 4: Coping strategy score based on the study program of participants

Chart 4 presented that PhD degree has the highest coping strategy score. With PhD (M=54, SD= 5.891), followed by Master degree (M=53.36, SD= 6.845) and the lowest score is the Bachelor degree (M=50.54, SD= 8.809).

4. Discussion

The first finding shows that for the academic stress factor, the Class situation factor (M=3.13, SD=.761) gets the highest average score, and Class speaking factor (M=2.63, SD=.856) get the lowest average score. For gender, there is no significant difference between male and female, female (M=2.95), and male (2.90). For the faculty there also no significant differences, sciences (M=2,93) and social sciences (M=2,91). For the continents, the highest stress score for South America (M=3,2) and the lowest one is Africa (M=2,65).

Study program analysis shows that PhD get the highest

score (M=3.0) and the lowest one is the Bachelor degree the second finding shows that the coping strategy result shows that be positive get the highest average and do other activities get the lowest average score. Chun Cao, Chang Zhu, Qian Meng (2018) Existed a wide divergence of coping strategy preferences when international students deal with different types of academic stressors. Based on gender, males get higher scores with males (M=54.18) and females (M= 51.47). For the faculty, science (M=53.64), and social science (M=52.67). From the continent, Asia gets the Highest score of coping strategy (M=53,94) and the lowest one in South America (M=42.50). based on the study program, PhD degree has the highest score (M=54) and the lowest one Bachelor degree (M=50.54).

The third finding is from the stress level we can see no significant difference between Male and Female, for the stress level the female gets higher than the male but for the coping strategy Male get a higher score than the female, it shows that even the female get more stress score than the male but the male more active on the coping strategy. It can be affected by international male students more open than female international students.

For the continent, South America gets the highest score for the stress and the lowest one in Africa. It can be implied by the number of South America in NENU, it just a small number of them. Meanwhile, the Africans have more countrymates and most of the study on the same faculty. For the coping strategy score, the highest one is Asian it can be caused by a similar culture from the domain and host country and the lowest coping strategy score is the South American. South American has a negative correlation with its Coping strategy. They get the highest stress score but get the lowest coping strategy score.

For the faculty and the study program it shows the positive correlation that the science gets a higher score of stress but also gets the higher score for the coping strategy, so does the study program for PhD that gets the highest score for Academic stress but also got the highest score for the coping strategy.

5. Conclusion

The final conclusions of the results of this research indicate that International Students in Northeast Normal University have Academic stress and they are actively adapted to the Coping management for the academic stress that they have. The different level of individuals will have different preferences for the coping strategy that they choose, many factors affecting their decision of using the coping strategy. Because they get academic stress abroad, cultural differences also take a big part in it.

References

[1] Aldwin, C., & Greenberger, E. (1987). Cultural differences in the predictors of depression. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15, 789-813.

- [2] Chen, C. P. (1999). Common stressors among international college students: Research and counseling implications. *Journal of College Counseling*, 2, 49-67.
- [3] Chinese Ministry of Education. (2018). *Statistical Report on International Students in China*.
- [4] Chun cao, Chang Zhu, Qian Meng. (2018). Chinese International Students' Coping Strategies, Social Support Resources in Response to Academic Stressors: Does Heritage Culture or Host Context Matter? *Springer Science+ Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2018. Current Psychology*.
- [5] Gang, Wei and Jing-Lin. (2009). *Determinants of International Students' Academic Performance*.
- [6] Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2002). *Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [7] Khawaja, Nigar G. & Helen M. Stallman. (2011). Understanding the Coping Strategies of International Students: A Qualitative Approach. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, volume 21, pp. 203-224
- [8] Lee, M., & Larson, R. (2000). The Korean "Examination Hell": Long Hours of studying, distress and depression. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 249-271
- [9] Lou, W., & Chi, I. (2000). The stressors and psychological well-being of senior secondary school students. *Psychological Science China*, 23,156-159.
- [10] Misra, Ranjita, Melanee Crist & Christopher J. Burant. (2003). Relationships Among Life Stress, Social Support, Academic Stressors, and Reactions to Stressors of International Students in the United States. *International Journal of Stress Management*, volume 10, pp. 137-157
- [11] Parta, Se-Hyuk & Youngshim Kimb. (2018). Ways of Coping with Excessive Academic Stress Among Korean Adolescents During Leisure Time. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-Being 2018*, vol. 13, 1505397
- [12] Shawl, Shabeena Iqbal & Nuseba Mehraj. (2017). Impact of Academic Stress: A Study of Coping Strategies Among Adolescents. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social science (IOSR - JHSS)* PP 40-45
- [13] Shawl, Shabeena Iqbal. (2017). Academic Stress And Coping Mechanism Among Students: An Indian Perspective. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social science (IOSR - JHSS)* no. 49323
- [14] Tamam, E. (2010). Examining Chen and Starosta's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity in a Multiracial Collectivistic Country. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 39(3), pp. 173-183.
- [15] Wong, P.T.P., & Wong, L.C.J. (2006). *Handbook of multicultural perspective on stress and coping*. Newyork, NY: Springer.

Author Profile



Fatmawati received Bachelor of English Literature from Hasanuddin University, Indonesia in 2012. In 2017, she did her Master of Teaching Chinese to Speaker of Other Language from Nanchang

University in China. From 2017 to Now, serve as a University lecturer at Gunadarma University in Indonesia and currently she is doing her Ph.D. degree of Curriculum and Pedagogy at Northeast Normal University, China.



Ahmad Fawad Sharifi did his B.S.in special psychology Department, Kabul Education university from 2011, 2014. He has been a university lecturer at Kabul Education university, parwan province, Afghanistan. He has been doing his M.S. in school of psychology, Northeast Normal university, china from 2018 to 2021.