



STUDENT STRESS LEVELS IN PREPARING THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Students in writing their theses face several obstacles that cause stress. The stressors faced by students vary so that students' stress responses can be categorized according to their levels. The research aims to determine the stress level of students in writing their theses at STIKES Kendal. This research is quantitative research with a descriptive analytical design. The sample for this research was 48 final year students who were writing their thesis. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling. The data collection tool used a questionnaire with 7 statements related to stress taken from the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale 21 (DASS 21) questionnaire. The results showed that the majority of students in preparing their thesis were at a moderate level of stress with responses that were difficult to rest, easily agitated, and easily offended.

Keywords: stress; student; thesis

First Received 01 May 2023	Revised 08 May 2023	Accepted 29 May 2023
Final Proof Received 18 August 2023	Published 31 August 2023	
How to cite (in APA style) PH, L., Santoso, D., & Mulyani, S. (2023). Student Stress Levels in Preparing Thesis. <i>Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research</i> , 5(3), 457-466. https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v5i3.2136 .		

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the thesis is a mandatory subject for students as a prerequisite for obtaining a bachelor's academic degree at university. A thesis is a scientific work in one field of study written by undergraduate students as a requirement for completing their studies (Rachmadi, 2019). Students are required to be able to adapt to the learning process in preparing their thesis. The learning process takes place individually, requiring students to be able to learn independently and it is hoped that the results of the thesis prepared can be useful for society in general. Preparing a thesis which is applied in the form of scientific work is the biggest obstacle for students because students have to go through procedures which include complete administration, lecturer guidance, proposal exams and thesis exams, so students feel burdened in completing academic education (Yulia, Afrianti, & Octaviani, 2015). The role of the lecturer in thesis supervision is to help students overcome the obstacles faced by students in writing their thesis (Gunawati, 2005). Common obstacles faced by students in writing their theses include students' inability to write, students' inadequate academic abilities, and students' lack of interest in research (Slamet, 2003).

Failure in preparing a thesis is also caused by students' difficulties in finding thesis titles, difficulty finding literature and reading materials, limited funds, and anxiety in dealing with supervisors (Riewanto, 2003). If these problems cause pressure in students, it can cause stress in preparing students' theses. Based on observations made by researchers on Diponegoro University Psychology Study Program students, it shows that Diponegoro University Psychology Study Program students who are writing their theses often experience anxiety

problems when facing their supervisors. Anxiety in facing the supervisor is shown by students in their behavior of avoiding meeting the supervisor. Researchers also found that the daily behavior of students who were writing their theses at the Diponegoro University Psychology Study Program showed symptoms of stress. Symptoms of stress shown by students who are writing their thesis in the Study Program Psychology at Diponegoro University, including the many student complaints about headaches that often interfere with daily activities, complaints about sleep disturbances in the form of difficulty sleeping, often looking anxious, often looking irritable, and there are several students who show symptoms of memory impairment as indicated by frequent Students forget guidance appointments with supervisors and appointments with friends. Stress is a condition of physical and psychological pressure due to demands within oneself and the environment (Rathus & Nevid, 2002, p. 142).

This statement means that a person can be said to be experiencing stress, when a person experiences a condition of internal pressure due to demands that come from within and from the environment. Stress does not always have a negative impact on individuals, but stress can have a positive impact. Stress that has a negative impact is called distress and stress that has a positive impact is called eustress. The differences in the impact of stress on individuals are caused by differences in the characteristics of each individual. The difference in these characteristics will determine the individual's response to the stimulus that is the source of stress, so that the response of each individual will be different even though the stimulus that is the source of stress is the same. Hardjana (1994, pp. 39-42) states that stress can cause disturbances in thinking, emotions and behavior. Individuals who experience stress tend to experience disturbances in the functioning of the mind, such as confusion of thoughts which causes difficulty in concentrating and difficulty in remembering. The emotional disturbance that is often experienced by stressed individuals is emotional instability which causes irritability. One form of behavioral disturbance experienced by stressed individuals is an increase in aggressive behavior in individuals. Stress can have a negative impact on health, because stress can reduce an individual's immune system. Individuals who experience stress will generally experience a decrease in their immune system which will make them susceptible to disease (Hardjana, 1994, p. 43).

When stressed there are changes in the physical system in an individual's body which results in the emergence of a disease. Diseases caused by stress include high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic headaches, stomach ulcers, ulcers, asthma and cancer. Stress can also bring about feelings of sadness (depression). Stress experienced by students can have negative and positive impacts. One of the factors that influence the differences in impact is individual characteristics. Based on the results of research that revealed the negative impact of stress on students, which was conducted by Misra & McKean (2000) on 249 students at Midwestern University in America, it showed that stress can cause individuals to experience anxiety, time management chaos and leisure satisfaction (www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_mOCTG/is_1_16/ai_65640245). Experimental research on the negative impact of stress on student performance has also been carried out by Van Gemmert & Van Galen (1997) on psychology students at Nijmegen University in the Netherlands. The treatment given to the subjects in this study was the task of writing numbers with time restrictions using RT (reaction time) and MT (movement time).

The results show that there is an influence of the stress conditions experienced by individuals on the results of writing number assignments, especially on the cognitive aspect. The results of this study show that stress has an effect on thought processes. Individuals who experience stress tend to have difficulty concentrating on the tasks at hand. The results of Pangestuti's

research in 2003 on six students of the Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Medicine, Diponegoro University stated that students who were preparing their thesis and delaying the completion of the thesis experienced a fairly high increase in stress levels (Pangestuti, 2003, p. 209). One of the factors that influence the stress experienced by students who are preparing their thesis from the supervisor factor is the problem of negative interpersonal relations with the supervisor in relation to communication and student assessment of the supervisor (Pangestuti, 2003, p. 200). Negative interpersonal relationships are one of the factors that can cause stress in individuals (Sarafino, 1994, p. 89). One of the positive and negative determinants of a relationship is communication, because communication is a component of forming interpersonal relationships (Sarwono, 1997, p. 193).

Communication is a process of delivering and receiving symbols that contain meaning, whether in the form of information, thoughts, knowledge and others, from communicator to communicant (Walgito, 2001, p. 75). Communication is an important factor in interpersonal relationships. One's need for curiosity, self-actualization, and the need to convey ideas, thoughts, knowledge and information reciprocally to others can be fulfilled through communication. Communication also helps individuals in the process of intellectual and social development, the formation of self-identity and identity, a source of social comparison and a determinant of mental health (Supratiknya, 1995, p. 10). Communication between students and supervisors in the process of preparing the thesis is very important, because one of the determining factors for the success or failure of thesis preparation depends on the course of the communication process between students and lecturers, especially the main thesis supervisor. Communication between students and supervisors is two-way interpersonal communication. Two-way interpersonal communication is communication that allows the communicant and the communicator to play an active role in responding as feedback about the message conveyed in the communication process (Walgito, 2001, p. 77). Having a response in the form of feedback on the messages in communication is the goal of communication.

Thesis is a scientific essay that must be written by students as a final requirement to complete academic education (Yulianto, 2008). Thesis is a scientific work written through the planning, implementation and results of scientific research by students at the Bachelor's or Bachelor's level (Soemanto, 2005). The thesis is the last gate that every student generally passes before becoming a graduate. When students have taken their final semester and have completed all their courses, students are required to write a thesis (Wulandari, 2012). The purpose of writing a thesis is to provide a scientific learning experience so that students are able to think and work scientifically, plan research, carry out scientific research, write scientific research results (Soemanto, 2005). Writing a thesis is a stressor experienced by students, causing changes both physically and psychologically and trying to adapt (Rosana, 2007). Students who are able to write a thesis are considered able to combine their knowledge and skills in understanding, analyzing, describing and explaining problems related to their scientific field (Bagus, 2015). Final year students in compiling a thesis encounter difficulties including finding and formulating problems, finding effective titles, proposal systematics, thesis systematics, difficulty finding literature or reading material, difficulties with scientific writing standards, funds, and limited time. Constraints or problems faced by students in compiling the final thesis assignment include anxiety, loss of motivation which later causes students to delay completing the thesis (Hariwijaya & Triton, 2005). Anxiety is one of the psychological effects of emotional mental disorders (Sutejo, Keliat & Hastono, 2011).

The prevalence of mental emotional disorders at the age of ≥ 15 years in Indonesia's population based on the results of the 2013 Riskesdas was 6.0% and in Central Java it was 4.7%, this result has decreased compared to the prevalence of mental emotional disorders in 2007 (Balitbangkes RI, 2013). Emotional mental disorder is a condition in which individuals experience emotional changes which can develop into a pathological state if it continues, so it is necessary to anticipate that people's mental health is maintained (Idaiani, Suhardi & Kristanto, 2009). Students who experience anxiety in the face of thesis exams are 80% (Zulkifli, 2012). Responses that arise when individuals experience anxiety include: worry, bad feelings, fear of their own thoughts, irritability, feeling tense, uneasy, anxious, easily startled, afraid of being alone, afraid of crowds and many people, disturbed sleep patterns, dreams tension, impaired concentration and memory, somatic complaints (pain in the muscles and bones, ringing in the hearing, palpitations, shortness of breath, digestive disorders, urinary disorders, headaches). Severe anxiety includes generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, phobic disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (Hawari, 2008).

Anxiety has several levels, namely mild anxiety, moderate anxiety, severe anxiety and panic. Mild anxiety related to tension in everyday life, the individual becomes more alert. This anxiety can motivate individuals to learn and generate growth and creativity. Moderate anxiety allows individuals to focus on what is important and set aside others. Individuals with severe anxiety focus on something detailed and specific and don't think about anything else. Individual panic level anxiety becomes fear and terror, because of loss of control. Anxiety that occurs in a person will cause several responses such as cognitive, physiological affective, behavioral and social responses (Sunaryanti, 2009). Not a few students who are working on their thesis experience anxiety. Data from final year students in the 2007 FKUB Nursing Department showed that 26 students were respondents, 48.4% (30 people) of students experienced mild anxiety, 43.5% (27 people) experienced moderate anxiety, and 8.1% (5 people) severe anxiety (Prime, 2011). Another research on students at the General Faculty of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta showed that out of 60 students who were working on their thesis, 3 people (5%) experienced very low anxiety, 10 people (16.67%) had low anxiety, 41 people (68.33%) had very low anxiety. moderate, 5 people (8.33%) high category anxiety and 1 person (1.67%) very high anxiety (Ardiansyah, 2011).

A preliminary study conducted by researchers by interviewing 10 Kendal STIKES students on October 7 2015 regarding the preparation of their theses resulted in 8 students saying they had difficulty sleeping because they were thinking about their thesis, they were not concentrating in lectures because they were thinking about their thesis, they were afraid of failing their thesis and were afraid that their thesis would not be completed correctly. time, dizzy because the title never got approval from the supervisor, tired because of continuous revisions and back and forth consultations with the supervisor. Results 2 students said it was normal in compiling thesis. There was anxiety experienced by students in writing their thesis, the efforts they had made to overcome their anxiety included 4 students saying they cried and prayed, 4 students preferred to stop working on their thesis and sleep, 2 students chose to go on a picnic. According to the description above, some of STIKES Kendal students have attempted therapy to reduce anxiety in the form of relaxation, distraction and spiritual activities. However, students have never done other generalist anxiety therapy in the form of five-finger hypnosis, therefore researchers are interested in researching the effect of generalist anxiety therapy as a whole in the form of relaxation, distraction, five-finger hypnosis and spiritual activities on students' anxiety levels in preparing their theses at STIKES Kendal.

METHOD

Quantitative research using descriptive analytical research design was carried out on 48 students who were writing their theses at STIKES Kendal. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling. The data collection tool uses a questionnaire with 7 questions related to stress taken from the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale 21 (DASS 21) questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire test obtained r count 0.588-0.877 and an alpha value of 0.918, so that the questionnaire was declared valid and reliable. The results of the questionnaire data are interpreted with the following stress levels: normal (0-7), light (8-9), moderate (10-12), severe (13-16), very severe (> 17). The research data were analyzed univariately in the form of a frequency distribution.

RESULTS

Table 1.
Respondent's age (n=48)

Mean	SD	Min	Max
21,36	0,843	19	23

Table 1 shows the average age of the respondents is 21 years.

Table 2.
Respondent's gender (n=48)

Gender	f	%
Man	12	25
Woman	36	75

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents are female.

Table 3.
Stress level of students in preparing their thesis (n=48)

Stress level	f	%
Normal	5	10,4
Light	12	25
Currently	28	58,3
Heavy	2	4,2
Very heavy	1	2,1

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents' stress levels are in the moderate stress category.

Table 4.
Student stress response in writing a thesis (n=48)

Stress response	Never		Sometime s		Often enough		Very often	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
I find it difficult to rest	4	8,3	8	16,7	15	31,25	21	43,75
I tend to overreact to situations	8	16,7	14	29,17	16	33,3	10	20,8
I feel like I've wasted a lot of energy worrying	14	29,17	14	29,17	12	25	8	16,7
I find myself easily agitated	4	8,3	14	29,17	18	37,5	12	25
I find it difficult to relax	8	16,7	13	27,08	15	31,25	12	25
I can't tolerate anything that blocks me from completing what I'm doing	7	14,58	16	33,3	12	25	13	27,08
I feel that I am irritable	8	16,7	11	22,9	17	35,42	12	25

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents indicated that it was difficult to rest, easily agitated, and irritable.

DISCUSSION

Age

The results of research on the age characteristics of thesis student respondents at STIKES Kendal show that the average age of respondents in group I and group II is 21 years old. These results are supported by research by Hastuti, Sutaryono and Arumsari (2015), regarding the effect of five finger hypnosis therapy to reduce anxiety in students who are writing their thesis at STIKES Muhammadiyah Klaten. The results showed that 7 students who experienced anxiety were students aged 21 years and 22 years. people (38.9%). Early adulthood experiences a lot of anxiety and stress because at this age the coping mechanisms are not yet fully formed, resulting in difficulties in making decisions (Prawirohusodo, 2006). Adult adjustment is more radical and the role in life changes, accompanied by physical changes that can disrupt physical homeostasis, emotional tension and stress. Early adulthood is a period full of emotional tension and is expressed in worry, worry arises depending on the achievement of adjustments to the problems faced at a certain time (Pieter & Lubis, 2010). These results are in accordance with the opinion of Potter and Perry (2005), who stated that anxiety disorders are more common in adulthood. As we get older, the inability to overcome problems will cause emotional mental disorders (Pieter & Lubis, 2010). One of the problems with emotional mental disorders is anxiety (Sutejo, Keliat & Hastono, 2011). Based on research results and opinions from several literatures, researchers concluded that the age characteristics of respondents who experience anxiety are 21 years old because at this age there is emotional tension and coping mechanisms have not yet been formed so it is very easy to experience anxiety.

Gender

The results of the research on gender characteristics showed that the majority of Kendal STIKES thesis students were female, namely (64.7%) in group I and (82.4%) in group II. These results are in accordance with the opinion of Potter and Perry (2005), who stated that anxiety disorders are more common in women. This research is supported by research conducted by Data, Pinilih and Kamal (2013), regarding the effectiveness of deep breathing relaxation on student anxiety in the pre-learning clinical D3 nursing study program at Muhammadiyah University Magelang where the level of student anxiety based on gender is the majority being female (30.5%) before being given treatment and (26.4%) after being given treatment. These results are also supported by research that was conducted by Puspita, Armiyati and Arif (2014), entitled the effectiveness of the time of applying deep breathing relaxation techniques to reduce anxiety in preoperative major abdominal surgery clients at Tugurejo General Hospital Semarang, showing that the majority of respondents were female. as many as 24 respondents (75%). Research conducted by Hastuti, Sutaryono and Arumsari (2015), regarding the effect of five-finger hypnotic therapy to reduce anxiety in students who are compiling their thesis at STIKES Muhammadiyah Klaten, found that students who experience anxiety are female, as many as 14 respondents (77.8 %).

These results are in line with Hadibroto's research (2010), which states that women have a higher level of anxiety or stress than men. Men and women have different levels of anxiety, where women are more easily offended, very sensitive, and accentuate their feelings, while men have masculine characteristics that tend to be dominant, active, more rational and don't accentuate feelings (Videbeck, 2008). Related to the level of anxiety between men and women, adult men have a strong mentality towards something that is considered a threat to them compared to women. Men have a wider level of knowledge and insight than women, because men interact

more with the outside environment while most women only live at home and carry out their activities as a household, so the level of knowledge and information obtained is limited (Kuraesin, 2009). Based on the results of the research and opinions from several literatures, the researchers concluded that the gender characteristics of the respondents who experienced anxiety were female because women found it difficult to control their emotions, causing anxiety.

Student stress level in compiling thesis

Severe anxiety is a condition where individuals tend to focus on something detailed and specific and not think about other things (Stuart, 2013). This is in accordance with the opinion of Gunawati, Hartiti & Listiara (2006), who stated that problems often found among students in writing their theses include difficulty finding titles, difficulty finding literature and reading materials, students' lack of interest in research and students not having the ability to write. ideas in written form. Obstacles or problems faced by students in preparing their thesis will cause anxiety which will result in students losing motivation and delaying completing their thesis (Hariwijaya & Triton, 2005). Other factors that influence the level of anxiety include age and gender, where in adulthood, self-adjustment is more radical and roles in life change, accompanied by physical changes that can disrupt physical homeostasis, emotional tension and stress (Pieter & Lubis, 2010). The female gender is more susceptible to anxiety because men and women have different levels of anxiety, where women are more irritable, very sensitive, and emphasize their feelings, while men have masculine characteristics which tend to be dominant, active, more rational and do not emphasize their feelings. (Videbeck, 2008).

Anxiety can be defined as an unclear fear related to feelings of uncertainty and helplessness. Anxiety has several influencing factors, including predisposing factors (biological, psychological, social) and precipitating factors (biological, psychological, social) (Stuart, 2013). Anxiety is a mild mental health disorder, anxiety is dangerous when it reaches the level of panic or fear. There are various levels of anxiety, but when anxiety affects someone, they must immediately think about ways to overcome it (Davidson, Neale & King, 2006). There are several ways to reduce anxiety, one of which is generalist anxiety therapy. Generalist anxiety therapy is a non-pharmacological therapy including relaxation techniques, distraction, five-finger hypnosis and spiritual activities (Keliat, 2015). An overview of the signs and symptoms of anxiety in students in preparing their thesis before being given anxiety generalist therapy in group I, the majority showed symptoms of anxiety (anxiety) as many as 30 respondents, urogenital symptoms (unable to hold urine) as many as 31 respondents, somatic symptoms (feeling tired) as many as 29 respondents, and in group II the majority showed intelligence disorders (difficulty concentrating) by 30 respondents, somatic symptoms (muscle aches and pains) by 26 respondents and gastrointestinal symptoms (weight loss) by 31 respondents. This problem must be addressed immediately because if it is not resolved it will cause emotional mental disorders and disrupt their lives.

Anxiety is a feeling of anxiety, worry or discomfort as if something is happening that is perceived as a threat (Videbeck, 2008). Anxiety has several influencing factors, including predisposing factors (biological, psychological, social) and precipitating factors (biological, psychological, social) (Stuart, 2013). Anxiety is caused by the presence of irrational thoughts in a person. If someone thinks bad about something, then that person will feel that something as a bad thing and vice versa. If someone thinks well about something, then that person will feel that something as a good thing (Corey, 2009). Other factors that influence the level of anxiety include age and gender, where in adulthood, self-adjustment is more radical and roles in life change, accompanied by physical changes that can disrupt physical homeostasis, emotional tension and stress (Pieter & Lubis, 2010). The female sex tends to be more vulnerable to anxiety because

men and women have different levels of anxiety, where women are more easily offended, very sensitive, and accentuate their feelings, while men have masculine characteristics that tend to be dominant, active, more rational and do not accentuate feelings (Videbeck, 2008). Student anxiety often appears as a normal thing because there are certain needs that must be passed by students to enter the next stage such as a thesis. Thesis that is considered heavy and not in accordance with individual abilities can cause anxiety (Kaplan & Saddock, 2006).

CONCLUSION

The majority of students who are compiling their thesis are on average 21 years old and female. The majority of students' stress levels in preparing their thesis are in the moderate stress category with responses that are difficult to rest, easily agitated, and irritable.

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