

EFFECT OF PSYCHOEDUCATION ON THE LEVEL OF ACADEMIC STRESS IN IMPROVING COPING STRATEGIES OF FINAL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Students are a special group of individuals involved in tertiary education. Final-year students experience higher academic stress due to thesis, time pressure, and transition to professional life. Through the learning process, students will encounter and overcome obstacles in their educational journey. Other triggers of student stress include academic pressure, social challenges, family tensions, and financial problems. These conditions cause stress in their lives. Method: Respondents in this study were 112 students in a control group consisting of 56 respondents and an intervention group consisting of 56 respondents. The questionnaire by the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS) consisted of 42 statements. Research design was Quasi-Experimental with a Control Group, Pre-Post Test design with Psychoeducation intervention. Sampling technique by total sampling. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were willing respondents for this study. Result: Stress level on Final Year students in the control group pre-test and post-test results p-value is $0.567 > 0.05$, indicating that the control group isn't affected before and after intervention. And then on the intervention group pre-test and post-test intervention, results are $p = \text{Value is } 0.004 < 0.005$, concluding that the intervention group pre-test and post-test intervention significantly affected stress levels in final students. Conclusion: Psychoeducation is one strategy for handling academic stress, which can be applied in individual, family, and group settings, focusing on psychological education of participants regarding various problems faced in life, helping people to develop supportive environments, and developing coping skills to manage various problems.

1. INTRODUCTION

Students are individuals in a special group who are involved in education and experience changes in the learning process at the tertiary level. (Dony Darma Sagita et al., 2017). During the learning process, students will experience and overcome obstacles in the academic process. (Umi Nurhayati, 2022). Obstacles to academics include lecturers having a very tight lecture schedule, lecture materials being difficult to obtain, and the belief that they are unable to master subjects that are considered difficult. (Merry & Henny Christine Mamahit, 2020; Umi Nurhayati, 2022; Veliant Nanda Wahyuni & Nia Handayani, 2024). Other obstacles can trigger student stress academic pressure, social challenges, family tensions, and financial problems. These conditions can cause stress in their lives. (Hou & Liu, 2016; Saifudin et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2019). Stress is a non-specific response of the body due to demands placed on individuals carrying out their life processes. (Umi Nurhayati, 2022)

Individuals experience stress differently. Stress is influenced by environmental factors, work stress, academic stress, and family stress. (Merry & Henny Christine Mamahit, 2020; Saifudin et al., 2023). Academic stress occurs due to excessive academic demands and assignments that students must complete immediately. Stress is not only experienced by juniors but also by seniors. The cause of academic stress is the increasing workload. Research by Nila Wulandari et al. (2025) states that factors contributing to academic stress include high academic standards, procrastination, exams, and poor study skills. (Nila Wulandari et al., 2025). This

Research was supported by research by Bella Khansa and Dewi Kumala Sari in 2022 found that students' busy schedules and high academic demands cause stress. Academic stress stems from the inability to handle all information simultaneously and the likelihood of success on exams. (Bella Khansa Puspita & Dewi Kumalasari, 2022).

Education at university can be a trigger for stressors for nursing students due to professional demands related to human health (Khairi Siregar & Rama Putri, 2019). Education in health, which nursing is, is competency-based education using student-centered learning methods, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and clinical practice, which also triggers stress. (Risma Dwi Rahmawati et al., 2025; Tantra & Irawaty, 2019). Research by Umi Nurhayati (2022, professional education causes students' experience levels, stress, and burnout in field education in other fields students (Umi Nurhayati, 2022). Academic stress experienced by nursing students is very significant. (Latifah, 2022; Umi Nurhayati, 2022).

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that academic stress is a barrier to student academic achievement. According to the WHO, the prevalence of stress in 2022 is ranked fourth in the world. 71% of students worldwide suffered from stress, while the prevalence in Asia is 61.3% and in Indonesia is 87.5%. The most common level of stress experienced by students is moderate, with a range of 71.6% (World Health Organization, 2025). Results from the American College Health Association survey measured higher stress levels 56.2% of students experiencing academic stress, which

resulted in students dropping out (Barbayannis et al., 2022; Domaley et al., 2023). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, 36.7% – 71.6% students experienced academic stress nationally, and 60% regionally in West Java Province (Hana et al., 2024; Muktar et al., 2025). Results from global and national surveys indicated that student academic stress stems from tension caused by academic demands, such as achieving a high GPA, increasing assignments, and completing final assignments, which ensures timely graduation. Research conducted by Rosyidah et al. (2020) reported level of severe stress among Hasanuddin University Nursing students was higher in the first year (90%) compared to the second year (89%) and the third year (73%) (Ishmah Rosyidah et al., 2020).

Stress can be viewed from two opposing perspectives. First, stress can negatively impact various aspects of life, including cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. Cognitive stress can be characterized by confusion, forgetfulness, excessive worry, and panic. Emotional stress can be characterized by sensitivity, irritability, frustration, and feelings of helplessness. Behaviorally, stress can lead to a reluctance to socialize, a tendency to isolate oneself, avoid others, and a reluctance to engage in activities. Second, stress can have a positive impact on a person because it strengthens their ability to strive to find solutions to their problems. Stress also provides many lessons for our bodies as they adapt to challenges. (Muktar et al., 2025; Saifudin et al., 2023). Academic stress is a condition in which students are unable to cope with the academic demands and perceived academic demands they receive as a disruption.

Academic stress is classified as distress. (Risma Dwi Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Results of a preliminary study conducted by researchers reducing stress levels of final year students who experience academic stress, because stress experienced by students can be a threat to both mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Humans can affect the physical condition of students. Stress reaction that arises can affect a person's ability to adapt, and important part of a person's life, but if it lasts for a long time can damage health. (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2024). Handling stress in students requires stress management. (Anggraeni & Itriyah, 2025). Students have activities and tasks for learning, including learning knowledge, organizational life, social life, and leadership skills, to achieve future success. Academic stress is characterized by difficulty concentrating, procrastination, skipping classes, anxiety, fear, and more. Furthermore, academic stress will also impact students' grade point average (GPA) (Bella Khansa Puspita & Dewi Kumalasari, 2022; Oktaviana & Mardianto, 2024).

This study focuses on the level of academic stress experienced by final year nursing students, as well as factors contributing to higher academic pressure in the health education environment, and highlights academic stress mitigation strategies. A study was conducted on students at a health college in Tulungagung district. The results of stress levels of final year nursing students from 20 students were obtained. Students experiencing moderate stress levels were 12 (60%) students, severe stress was 3 (15%) students, and those.

Experiencing mild stress were 5 (25%) students. In addition to these results, results of interviews with several students revealed increasing academic burden and the preparation of final assignments that students must complete in order to graduate on time. Therefore, stress management is needed to improve the coping strategies of final year students. Student stress management is stress management can be done through several interventions or approaches that reduce students' stress levels in the academic field. One that uses psychoeducational interventions increased students' insight and knowledge, and trained students to reduce academic stress levels and stress occurring other than academic stress experienced by students. (Anggraeni & Itriya, 2025).

Psychoeducation is an evidence-based approach to stress management that provides information to students about mental illness, such as causes, symptoms, treatment, and stress management strategies to improve well-being. (Indrawati et al., 2025; Jalal et al., 2022; Umi Nurhayati, 2022). Psychoeducation is not just about providing information; it also includes developing practical skills that help individuals or families manage their conditions and improve their quality of life. The type of psychoeducation used in the program provides information through its psychoeducational model that prioritizes providing knowledge about stress management. (Umi Nurhayati, 2022). Stress management with psychoeducation is a program that controls or regulates stress with the aim of identifying the causes of stress and knowing stress management techniques, so that people can better control stress.

life rather than being crushed by stress itself (Anggraeni & Itriya, 2025; Enggarati et al., 2024). Psychoeducation can help reduce the level of stress experienced by individuals, manage the pressure they experience, so they can live their lives, and direct individuals in supporting better individual development coping strategies.

2. METODE

Design on this research used a Quasi-Experimental with a Control Group Pre-Post Test design. Sampling technique in this study used total sampling; the number of respondents used in this study was taken entirely, and interventions were carried out in the control and intervention groups. A study was conducted on final-year nursing students who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria used were final-year students who were willing to be respondents in the study. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria were students who were not present during by research process, students who dropped out in the previous semester, and students who were absent illness, not final year nursing students. In accordance with established criteria, a total of samples in the study were obtained from 112 students who were divided into two groups, namely the control group and the final year student intervention group. The control group consisted of 56 respondents, and the intervention group of 56 respondents. In control and intervention groups, stress levels were only measured using the DASS-42 pre-test questionnaire. In the post-test, the control group was not given psychoeducation about stress, while the intervention group was given.

Psychoeducation through counseling and stress management training for the final-year students improved students' coping strategies in dealing with academic stress in the final semester.

This study used questionnaires and data collection techniques, including questionnaires, research subjects, and an informed consent form, before completing the research questionnaire. This Study used by DASS-42 measuring tool (Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale-42), consisting of 42 statements (Marsidi, 2021) Developed by Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995, which was divided into statements of a person's level of stress, anxiety, and depression, and developed according conditions of research subjects.

This research questionnaire was divided into categories: normal stress level scores 0-14, mild 15-18, moderate 19-25, severe 26-33, and very severe > 34. The anxiety level score categories were Normal 0-7, mild 8-9, moderate 10-14, severe 15-19, and very severe > 20. While the depression level score categories were Normal 0-9, mild 10-13, moderate 14-20, severe 21-27, and very severe > 28. This study used a standardized measuring instrument, so that no reliability and validity tests were carried out at the beginning of the study, but reliability and validity tests were carried out after data were collected.

Reliability and validity tests were carried out on the DASS-42 questionnaire using Pearson product-moment, with a positive value of 0.543 on statement stress, anxiety, and depression items. Results of the reliability test obtained data on DASS-42 questionnaire items showing stress levels: 0.891, anxiety: 0.882, and depression: 0.892.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of research conducted by researchers with Effect by Psychoeducation on Academic Stress Levels in Improving Coping Strategies of Final Year Students are Age, Gender, and how students deal with stress levels in improving student coping strategies are as follows:

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics Based on Age and Homogeneity Test of Intervention Group and Control Group in Final Year Students

Age	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max	P-value
Intervention	21,54	1,319	22	21	23	0,382
Control	21,56	1,321	22	21	23	

Results in Table 1 show that in the control group, the average age of students was 21.56 years, with a median of 22 years and a standard deviation of 1.321. Meanwhile, in the intervention group, the average age of students was 21.54 years, with a median of 22 years and a standard deviation of 1.319. In both control and intervention groups, students' ages were close to the oldest age, with a maximum value of 23 years in both groups. Students aged 21-23 years are included in the late adolescent stage, where they have reached the limits of their abilities, are more emotionally controlled, have a better understanding of law, are wiser in making decisions, and understand their desires.

This stage includes late adolescence. In late adolescence, they develop increasingly positive attitudes and self-maturity. This must be actively encouraged by parents and others around them. (Hamidah & Rizal, 2022). Student age did not influence the level of academic stress in nursing study programs in the final semester.

This finding is supported by research by Nety et al. (2020) and Saifudin et al. (2023), which found that age was not associated with academic stress levels in students. (Hatmanti & Septianingrum, 2020; Saifudin et al., 2023). Aging is closely related to a person's experience in dealing with stressors. As an individual ages, they will be better at managing stress, resulting in an increase and decrease in academic stress levels according to the stressors they experience. Increasing age means a person's maturity will also increase, and the person will be able to think maturely and manage stress well, based on the age of the respondents in the study. Results of the homogeneity test (homogeneity of variance) obtained p value = $0.382 > 0.05$, so it can be concluded that the age variable of students in the control group and intervention group has the same variance (homogeneous).

Table 2 Respondent Characteristics Based on Age and Homogeneity Test of Intervention Group and Control Group in Final Year Students

Gender	Control Group		Intervention Group		<i>p-value</i>
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
Male	11	19,7	12	21,4	0,896
Female	45	80,3	44	78,6	

The results data in Table 2 above show the gender of students in the control and intervention groups. The majority of students in the control group were female, with 45 (80.3%) respondents, and 11 (19.7%) were male. In the intervention group, the majority of students were female, with 44 (78.9%) respondents, and 12 (21.4%) were male.

These data indicate that the majority of the students were female.

Data showing the majority of students are female. And then the results of the homogeneity test, with a p -value of $0.896 > 0.05$, thus concluding that gender variables have the same variance (homogeneous). Results indicate that female gender and the majority of health-related fields are most popular among women in higher education, including nursing and medicine.

Health-related fields are more attractive to women. (Risma Dwi Rahmawati et al., 2025). Research by Saifudin et al. (2023) indicated that female students experience higher levels of stress than male students. Women experience more stress than men, due to hormonal factors and psychosocial stressors. (Dony Darma Sagita et al., 2017). High-stress women on reducing stress levels are more towards task-oriented coping, while men tend to be more ego-oriented, so men will be more relaxed on dealing with stressors from academic life. (Saifudin et al., 2023). The level of stress experienced by women and men is a variation of academic stress which influenced by the responses of each student. (Hatmanti & Septianingrum, 2020; Saifudin et al., 2023).

These two studies indicate that adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to experiencing high levels of stress. Women are more susceptible to experiencing higher levels of stress, and men and women differ in their coping strategies.

Table 3 Characteristics of stress levels of students in the Control Group and Intervention Group in the Final Year Students

Group	Treatment	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max
Control	Before	20,72	22	3,176	14	33
	After	21,32	22	4,152	14	33
Intervention	Before	19,10	19	3,466	14	33
	After	16,76	16	3,572	14	33

Results data from table 3 showed in the control group, with an average stress level students in control group before intervention, mean value was 20.82 with mean value of 22 with standard deviation of 3.176 and in e control group after intervention, student data was obtained to determining stress level with an averaged value of 21.32, mean value of 22 with standard deviation of 4.152.

These results indicate that in the control group, there was an increase in stress levels obtained from the difference between mean values before and after the intervention, there was an increase of 0.6 with a standard deviation difference of 0.976, and the minimum value was 14, and the maximum value was 33 in the control group. In the intervention group, before intervention, stress level data had a mean value of 19.10, a mean value of 19 with a standard deviation of 0.976, and a minimum value is 14 and a maximum value is 33 in the control group. In the intervention group, before intervention, stress level data had a mean value of 19.10, a mean value of 19 with a standard deviation of 3.466, while after intervention, data obtained for student stress level had a mean value of 16.76, a mean value of 16 with a standard deviation of 3.572.

These results indicate that in the intervention group, after the

Intervention, there was a difference in mean value of 2.34, with a difference in standard deviation value of 0.105, and the minimum value was 14, and the maximum value was 33 in the intervention group. The stress level before intervention tended to approach the highest value or maximum stress level, and after intervention tended to decrease or approach the minimum value.

Results of a study conducted by researchers showed that students experienced increased levels of academic and non-academic stress in higher education because the pressure of the learning process in the control group pre-test dan post-test intervention increased with a mean value of 21.32, while in the intervention group decreased by 16.76. This is in accordance with research by Anwar et al. (2021, students who experience academic stress levels are academic individuals who are responsible for carrying out their duties with academic and non-academic pressures during the teaching and learning process at universities, which is a stressor for students (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021).

This research supported research by Meri Afrianti (2021, which states that academic stress in students is categorized as moderate, with analysis results showing significant differences in the level of academic stress in students. (Meri Efrianti, 2021). Students pursuing higher education in academics experience academic stressors due to their inability to manage their academic assignments and frequent delays in completing assignments, which in turn negatively impacts their stress. (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021).

Stress is basically needed by individuals to continue managing stress well; however, stress response in students varies depending on the mental abilities of each student, and all past events can affect stress, coping mechanisms, age, gender, the size of pressure, and the ability to manage emotions in each student. (Karjono et al., 2022; Meri Efrianti, 2021) Therefore, to overcome this problem, students needed self-management strategies to help them manage stress. One strategy can be used to provide psychoeducation on self-management, so that students can understand and carry out their responsibilities, completing assignments until they complete their studies. (Karjono et al., 2022).

Psychoeducation is a strategy that can be used to handle academic stress and applied in individual, family, and group settings that focus on psychological education of participants about various problems faced in life, helping others be more able developing various sources supporting their environment, and developing coping skills to manage various problems. (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021; Indrawati et al., 2025; Karjono et al., 2022).

Table 4: The Effect of Psychoeducation on the Stress Levels of Students in the Control Group and Intervention Group for Final Year Students

Group	Treatment	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max
Kontrol	Before	19,80	21	3,263	14	33
	After	20,30	21	4,076	14	33
Intervention	Before	18,99	18	3,456	14	33
	After	15,87	15	3,565	14	33

Data from table 4 showings by results of analysis effect of psychoeducation on stress levels of students in Control Group and Intervention Group on Final Year Students pre and posttest with Analysis Correlation Product Moment by SPSS 23.0 for windows given intervention on stress levels of students in control group, stress levels of students p = Value is $0.567 > 0.05$, so it can be concluded in the control group there is no effect pretest and posttest intervention. While in the intervention group, pre-test and post-test intervention, results analysis is $0.004 < 0.005$, so it can be concluded that in the intervention group, pre-test and post-test intervention significantly affected on stress levels of final students.

Research conducted on the control group and intervention group on reducing stress levels in final students towards academic stress through psychoeducation was very effective in reducing stress levels, anxiety, and depression in students. The results of this study are presented. These results are supported by research by Laras et al (2022, stating that psychoeducational training can reduce academic stress and increase understanding among teachers, students, and IP practitioners through materials, practices, assignments, and discussions. (Laras et al., 2022).

Psychoeducation is expected to improve self-instruction students, enabling them to manage academic and non-academic stress. Psychoeducation is expected to help students in facing their assignments and being able to work on theses and reduce academic stressors, so benefits are obtained by themselves, remaining enthusiastic about doing academic tasks from

completing college assignments, practicals, and working on student theses, and becoming a student stress coping strategy (Anwar & Djudiyah, 2021; Laras et al., 2022). According to Sarafino (2006, coping with stress is processed in individuals who make efforts to manage situations where there is a perceived gap between effort and ability, which is assessed as a cause of the emergence of stressful situations (Sarafino, 2008). Coping can help improve emotional balance and adapt better academic life. Students' good coping skills can improve mental health when facing academic pressure, the ability to manage stress, and psychological well-being. (Agustina & Rachman, n.d.)

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows by effect of psychoeducation on stress levels in final year students or final semester students in the control group with The average stress level of students in the control group before the intervention was obtained at a mean value of 20.82, and after the intervention, student data were obtained to determine the effect on stress levels, with an average value of 21.32. These results indicate that in the control group, there was an increase in stress levels obtained from the difference between mean values before and after the intervention, there was a increase of 0.6. While in the intervention group before the intervention, the stress level of students had a mean value of 19.10, and after the intervention, the stress level data were obtained with a mean value of 16.76. These results indicate that in the intervention group, after intervention, there was a difference in the mean value of 2.34 with a difference in the standard deviation value of 0.105.

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