

## Reducing Academic Stress with Journaling Techniques: A Review

Ilham Khairi Siregar<sup>1</sup>, Ifit Novita Sari<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

<sup>2</sup>Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, Universitas Islam Malang

e-mail: [ilhamkhairi@umsu.ac.id](mailto:ilhamkhairi@umsu.ac.id)

### Abstract:

*The education process in higher education allows new students to feel the pressure of changing the learning process from high school to the lecture process in higher education. Students with considerable pressure feel the academic stress condition in themselves. Academic resilience is expected to reduce student academic stress, namely increasing student resilience in facing difficulties and pressures in the lecture process. Journaling technique is an alternative treatment that can be given to students, as part of the rational emotive behavior therapy approach. This figure suggests an expressive writing technique to cognitive gaps (academic stress) experienced by students.*

**Keywords:** literature review, academic stress, counseling model

### Abstrak:

Proses pendidikan di perguruan tinggi memungkinkan mahasiswa baru merasakan tekanan perubahan proses pembelajaran dari sekolah menengah ke proses perkuliahan di perguruan tinggi. Mahasiswa dengan tekanan yang cukup besar merasakan kondisi stres akademik dalam dirinya. Ketahanan akademik diharapkan dapat mengurangi stres akademik mahasiswa yaitu meningkatkan ketahanan mahasiswa dalam menghadapi kesulitan dan tekanan dalam proses perkuliahan. Teknik penjurnalan merupakan salah satu alternatif perlakuan yang dapat diberikan kepada siswa sebagai bagian dari pendekatan terapi perilaku emosi rasional. Gambar ini menunjukkan teknik menulis ekspresif untuk kesenjangan kognitif (stres akademik) yang dialami siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** tinjauan literatur, stres akademik, model konseling

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## 1. Introduction

The lecture process is a compulsory study activity carried out by students. Some of these activities include theoretical lectures, practical lectures, and field work lectures. For adolescents transitioning from senior high school to tertiary education becomes a new challenge to continue learning to carry out their obligations as students. Students are individuals who are following the education process in higher education. According to (Siswoyo, 2007) students can be defined as individuals studying at the tertiary level, both public and private or other institutions that are on the same level as tertiary institutions. Education in higher education realizes that students have superior character, competitiveness in the business world as well as in the industrial and educational world. Student titles are pride for adolescents because they are agents of change, solutions to problems in society and the country (Dirjen Belmawa, 2017). But it also becomes a challenge for students because of their great responsibility in providing change through their intellect.

Basically, every individual experiences difficulties, the individual will not be separated from various difficulties in his life. Difficulties can occur at times and places that are sometimes difficult to predict. In certain situations where difficulties cannot be avoided, individuals who have resilience can overcome various life problems in their way. Individuals will be able to make decisions in difficult conditions quickly. The existence of resilience will turn problems into a challenge, failure into success, inability to become strength. Researchers focus on new students because researchers see many new students facing various challenges that require resilience. According to (Singgih & Gunarsa, 1995) students have their challenges in life, when individuals enter the world of lectures,

individuals face various changes, ranging from changes due to differences in the nature of the high school and tertiary education, differences in social relations, selection of fields of study or majors, and economic problem. In addition to facing these changes, new students will also face pressure due to the acculturation process with a new culture in which they get higher education. Students must face cultural changes, lifestyle changes, environmental changes and students are required to be able to cope well so that the continuity of education also goes well.

Based on the theory of developmental psychology, students are in their late teens and early adulthood. A phase that is considered full of various problems and pressures. The multiple changes they experienced which were then followed by the many demands that they got caused various problems to emerge. This condition is important to be understood by educators to address the various problems experienced by students. A good understanding will provide the basis for the handling (intervention) that will be carried out to assist students in overcoming various problems they face so that the ongoing lecture process reaches maximum and satisfying results. The results of observations at one of Medan's private universities on three first-year students to explore various problems that are being faced as new students. Some of the problems raised include some changes in student life that require students to adapt to these changes, including adaptation to new relationships, new friends, new rules in the new environment. If students cannot adapt to these difficulties students will easily experience stress, frustration, and loss of motivation (Cahyani & Akmal, 2017). Another change is a change in learning style, students are required to be independent, manage limited finances, manage time and improve self-discipline.

Various conditions and challenging situations cause students to need resilience adjust and still be able to develop themselves well following their competencies. Individuals ability to survive, rise, and adjust to difficult conditions can protect individuals from the negative effects arising from adversity. This kind of resilience is essential to someone. According to (Helton & Smith, 2014), resilience is one's ability to survive, rise, and adjust to difficult conditions. In line with the opinion of (Aunillah & Adiyanti, 2015) resilience is seen as a capacity that is owned and developed through the learning process. Resilience means the ability to recover from a state, return to its original form after being bent, pressed, or stretched (Thistle, Cameron, Ghorayshi, Dennison, & Scott, 2012). When used as a psychological term, resilience is an individual's ability to quickly recover from change, illness, misfortune, or difficulty. Resilience is influenced by internal factors which include cognitive abilities, gender, and the attachment of individuals to culture, as well as external factors from family and community. Resilient individuals, have the ability to control emotions, behavior and attention in dealing with problems. Conversely, individuals who have difficulties in regulating emotions find it difficult to adapt, establish relationships with others and maintain relationships with others.

Individuals who have resilience are able to quickly return to pre-trauma conditions, appear to be immune from a variety of negative life events, and able to adapt to extreme stress and misery (Holaday & McPhearson, 1997). (LaFromboise, Hoyt, Oliver, & Whitbeck, 2006) see resilience as a protection mechanism that modifies individual responses to situations that have risks at critical points throughout one's life. The concept of resilience is based on the capacity of an individual's ability to accept, face and transform the problems that have been, and will be faced throughout the life of the individual. Resilience can be used to help individuals deal with and overcome difficult situations and can be used to maintain and improve their quality of life. According to (Papalia, 2015), resilience is conceptualized as a personality type with traits, good adaptability, self-confidence, independence, articulation, attention, helpful and centered on tasks. (Damon, Lerner, & Eisenberg, 2006) conveys a different concept, resilience is not seen as a permanent trait in the individual, but as a result of dynamic transactions between external forces and the strengths of the individual. Resilience is not seen as a definite attribute or specific output but instead as a dynamic process that develops over time (Everall, Altrows, & Paulson, 2006).

This is in line with Masten (LaFromboise et al., 2006) which reveals that resilience is a process and not a fixed innate attribute. Resilience is more accurate when seen as part of the development of mental health in a person that can be improved in one's life cycle. (Reivich & Shatté, 2002) described

seven aspects of resilience, these aspects are emotional regulation, control of impulses, optimism, ability to analyze problems, empathy, self-efficacy, and achievement. Resilience is influenced by internal factors which include cognitive abilities, gender, and individual attachment to culture, as well as external factors from the family and community. Resilient individuals, have the ability to control emotions, behavior and attention in dealing with problems. The phenomenon that occurs based on the results of the analysis of the inventory filling results of the CDAC Team found students indicated to have a bad perception of the thesis causing anxiety in the completion of the thesis and delaying starting the thesis. Many activities related to thesis preparation, such as looking for supervisors and looking for research themes. (Nursalam & Efendi, 2008) states that students are required to be able to describe the background of the CHAPTER I problem, describe some theories or concepts in CHAPTER II, design a research framework in CHAPTER III, the research methods in CHAPTER IV, the results and discussion in CHAPTER V, and subsequent conclusions and suggestions in Chapter VI. Another thing that is no less important is that students are required to complete courses that are required for graduation. In addition, students are also faced with the problem of insufficient funds in the process of completing a thesis because not only once a student does a revision with a supervisor but it can be done several times.

This is in line with the results of the research of (Ihsan & Zaki, 2018) which suggested the dominant factors that hindered the completion of student studies including (1) internal and learning factors, (2) preparedness and self-potential factors, (3) economic and campus management factors , (4) external factors in the community environment. From this opinion, readiness and self-potential factors (consisting of readiness variables, cultural background interests, the relationship between lecturers and students) are interesting enough issues to be examined concerning the phenomena that occur in most tertiary institutions. From some of the problems felt by the individual there are also several ways that individuals can do to free their minds and feelings from various problems and problems. There are those who isolate themselves from the crowd and others, there are also those who are just the opposite, meeting other people such as parents, relatives, friends, teachers and so on just to mean it to him. So some researchers wrote down every incident and event that disturbs their thoughts, feelings and self as a diary, then keeps it as a diary (Widuri, 2012).

Daily journals or journals provide individual freedom to express and understand life problems, thoughts, feelings and behaviors that are experienced with the aim of reducing, overcoming or correcting and even solving the burden of problems in their nature. (Erford, 2015) revealed that what makes journaling as one of the written expression techniques is brought in counseling sessions and openly discussed with counselors, and becomes a driving force for counseling. Journaling also helps keep the counselee focused on the purpose of counseling even when not in a counseling session. This journaling technique was also adopted from the Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) counseling technique pioneered by Albert Ellis. Ellis stated that if individuals are not conditioned to think and feel in a certain way, then they tend to behave in this way, even though they realize that their behavior rejects or negates themselves (Corey). Other effects of journaling include the expression of feelings, which can lead to greater self-awareness and acceptance and enable the client to create a relationship with himself. Short-term effects of journaling include increased pressure and psychological arousal.

(Erford, 2015) explains that journaling can be used for self-discovery, growth and self-actualization purposes by channeling feelings and emotions through creative expression and writing processes. Carl Rogers is the creator of a counseling and therapy approach that aims to help clients fulfill their unique potential to become their own personal. During this counseling process clients may develop a deeper understanding of their true goals. For some clients, achieving overall personal goals concerning the characteristics of people who are fully functioning, and not goals decided by others (Nelson-Jones, 2011). There are not many references and studies that discuss journaling techniques, including using journaling techniques in the counseling process. While journaling is effortless to implement to reveal, explore, understand, interpret and assess problems experienced by clients. (Erford, 2015) explains that journaling techniques can begin with the client writing one or two

paragraphs at the beginning of the session. This paragraph will reflect how the client feels or what is happening in his life and determine the direction of the session. The journaling technique then functions to guide the client through different writing exercises. Next, the counselor and client then discuss the information revealed in the journal. In this method, the counselor often assigns to be completed in the next session.

## 2. Result

The approach used is Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy with Journaling Counseling Techniques to develop Student Academic Resilience. REBT is a revolutionary therapeutic model that focuses on the client's current thoughts, emotions, and behavior. (Erford, 2015) explains that journaling can be used for self-discovery, growth and self-actualization purposes by channeling feelings and emotions through creative expression and writing processes. (Erford, 2015) revealed that what makes journaling one of the written expression techniques is brought in counseling sessions and openly discussed with counselors, and becomes a driving force for counseling. Journaling also helps keep the counselee focused on the purpose of counseling even when not in a counseling session. This journaling technique was also adopted from the Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) counseling technique pioneered by Albert Ellis. Ellis stated that if individuals are not conditioned to think and feel in a certain way, then they tend to behave in this way, even though they realize that their behavior rejects or negates themselves (Corey). Other effects of journaling include the expression of feelings, which can lead to greater self-awareness and acceptance and enable the client to create a relationship with himself. Short-term effects of journaling include increased pressure and psychological arousal.

## 3. Conclusion

Based on the problems presented in the introduction is a condition that occurs in the world of education, these problems need to be immediately intervened to improve the quality of education and reduce student academic stress through increasing academic resilience by providing journaling counseling treatments. It intrigued the writer to study the interventions given to the academic stress problems felt by the Guidance and Counseling Study Program students. The journaling technique revealed that written expression techniques is carried out in counseling sessions and discussed with the counselor openly, and becomes the driving force for counseling.

**Penghargaan:** Penulis memberikan penghargaan kepada pihak-pihak yang telah berkontribusi pada penelitian ini, para penulis artikel yang sudah berkontribusi terhadap tinjauan literatur ini.

**Konflik Kepentingan:** Penulis mendeklarasikan bahwa hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan bebas dari konflik kepentingan dari pihak-pihak tertentu yang mungkin mengklaim hasil dari penelitiannya.

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