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Abstract

Academic failure happens when students poor in grade, do not achieve the expectation and do not meet the academic standards. Academic failure is a stressful event which students must deal with it. This study was conducted to capture how students in Java coped with academic failure from indigenous perspective. The participants were 84 under-graduated Javanese students in Yogyakarta. An open-ended questionnaire was employed to explore the coping strategies. The participants were asked how they had coped with academic failure. The thematic categorization was used to analyze the data by categorizing it based on theme similarities. The result showed that there were seven forms of coping which performed by Javanese students who experienced academic failure; (1) confrontive problem solving, (2) planful problem solving, (3) positive reappraisal, (4) accepting responsibility and blaming, (5) seeking social support, (6) avoidance, and (7) close to God. The seven forms of coping can be categorized as two types of coping strategies according their function in managing problem. The confrontive and planful are categorized a problem-focused coping. Meanwhile, positive reappraisal, accepting and blaming, seeking social support, avoidance, and close to God are categorized as emotional focused coping. In this research, we found that close to God as a unique form of coping in Javanese students.

Keywords: coping, academic failure, stress, javanese

Introduction

Success in academic is the most important attainment in Javanese students. A prior study from Kurniastuti, Faturochman, and Kim (2014) found that most of the Javanese youth perceived academic achievement as the most achievement which they most proud. This finding consistent with the research from Rusinani, Soetjipto, Kurnianingsih, and Kim (2014) in junior high school students in Java and also research from Budiarti, Soecipto, Kurnianingsih, and Kim (2014) in senior high school student in Java. Eko (2004) also found that academic achievement plays the important role in affecting the teenager, especially in the future plan related their study and job.

The Javanese students put the academic achievement as the most important attainment because they perceive success in academic as self-fulfillment, achieve the goal, result of their effort, make their family proud, and be useful for others (Kurniastuti et. al, 2014). From the previous research, we can infer that students perceived that success in academic was important in order to make their family proud of them. Achieving the academic success in Javanese student related to their relationship with the parent. In Javanese,

there is a children's trust to the parent which develops in family which become a basis in their close relationship (Hakim, Thontowi, Yuniarti, and Kim, 2012).

Research from Rusinani et. al (2014) revealed parent and family play a major role in affecting their children's achievement, rather than friend and teacher. It consistent with Fathoni, Faturochman, Kurnianingsih, and Kim (2014) who found that in senior high school and undergradute students, support from family has the biggest influence in achieving success in academic. There were many kinds of support which family give to children such as emotional, informational, material, and religious support. The emotional support was found to be the most important support to children in achieving success in academic.

Relating to the explanation before, academic achievement is important to students. Thus academic failure can be a stressful event for students. According to the preliminary study which was conducted by researchers in 46 Javanese undergraduate students, we found the definition of academic failure in Javanese students. The students defined academic failure as poor in an exam, when the results do not meet the student's

Coping Strategies On Students After Experiencing Academic Failure: An Indigenous Study In Javanese Context

expectation, and when the results do not meet a minimum of academic standards. Failed in academic has effect not only on the students, but also their parent and family who support them.

Stress can have many kinds of implications on student's physical, mental health, well being, and also academic performance (Ryan, 2013). Thus, it is important to study on how the students cope the academic failure as a stressful event. Rijavec and Brdar (2002) revealed that coping in academic failure can arise self-regulated learning and academic success of students.

Coping refers to changing cognitive and behavioral effort to manage pressure from internal and external that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the person (Folkman, 2010; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Coping also can be described as managing which includes minimizing, avoiding, tolerating, and accepting stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The term of coping often used in a narrower definition that the response required by the organism to adapt to adverse circumstances (Schwarzer & Knoll, 2003). Lazarus (1993) also said that coping is a key in adaptation. The important things in

exploring coping strategy are describing what person thought and done in coping the stressful events.

Based on grant theories of coping strategies, there are two types of coping, problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988; Lazarus, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Problem-focused and emotion-focused coping were found to be often used in facing the stressful events in daily life (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Problem-focused coping defined as coping strategy which focuses on solving the problem. Whereas emotion-focused coping involves a cognitive process which concerning to minimize emotion distress (Lazarus, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The two types of coping have a different function in managing problem (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Problem-focused coping has a function to change the problem by making a solution and taking action. Meanwhile, emotion-focused coping has a function to regulate the distress emotion. Taking action to solve problems is more desirable than reappraising the relational meaning. But sometimes there is a situation that people can do nothing to change the condition and emotional focused will be a best

coping choice. When stressful condition is viewed hardly to change, people prefer to perform emotion-focused coping, whereas when condition are appraised as controllable by action, people will perform problem-focused coping (Lazarus, 1993).

Coping is a multidimensional process. There are two forms of a problem-focused coping and six forms of emotion-focused coping. The two forms of problem coping are confrontive problem coping and planful problem solving. Whereas the emotion-focused coping include of: (1) distancing, (2) escape-avoidance, (3) accepting responsibility or blame, (4) exercising self control over the expression of feeling, (5) seeking social support, and (6) positive reappraisal (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, and Gruen, 1986; Folkman & Lazarus, 1988).

Confrontive problem coping is an aggressive efforts to alter the situation such as effort in achieving a goal (Folkman et.al, 1986). Whereas planful problem coping is a rational problem solving techniques i.e having a plan in achieving the goal, knowing what must to do (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). It can also be described as deliberate problem-

focused coping in altering situation (Folkman et.al, 1986). If the desired outcome is not within the person's control, the problem-focused coping forms are inappropriate, and emotion-focused coping forms which can reduce distress are more appropriate.

The type of emotion-focused coping which often used in dealing a problem is coping avoidance (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). The form of this coping i.e relaxation or jogging. Those techniques can neutralize a distress, however it can be maladaptive. High usage of avoidance coping mechanism was found significantly related to high level of stress (Ryan, 2013). Another type of emotion-focused coping is distancing. Distancing is efforts to detach oneself. It can be used to help people get through extremely stressful conditions such as using a humor in a workplace to face the challenging situation.

Besides that, there is a positive reappraisal which can be defined as cognitive coping which create positive meaning by focusing on personal growth (Folkman et.al, 1986). This form of coping including a self change to be better which arise positive emotions such as proud and satisfaction, even reduce

Coping Strategies On Students After Experiencing Academic Failure: An Indigenous Study In Javanese Context

negative emotions. Seeking social support can be described as an effort in seeking informational and emotional support (Folkman et.al, 1986).

Coping is a mediator of emotion responses which has an effect in changing the emotion. Coping will increase during the stressful encounter and then change the emotion in many ways (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Folkman and Lazarus (1985) viewed stressful encounter as dynamic process. In their research, coping in academic context assessed by three stages of mid term exam which consisted of (1) anticipation stage before the exam, (2) waiting stage after the exam and before grades were announced, and (3) after grades were posted. Subjects which consisted of 189 students rated the Stress Questionnaire with 5 points Likert scale. Analysis based on coping scale consisting of 8 subscales (1 problem-focused, 6 emotion-focused, and 1 mixed problem and emotion-focused coping scale) showed that 99% students used problem-focused coping in Time 1 (anticipation stage before exam), 95% used both of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping in Time 2 (waiting stage after the exam and before the grades were announced, and 94% used both of coping in Time 3 (after grades were posted).

After the grades were posted, student's reaction was determined by individual differences on an outcome (grade which they received). Variance analysis with grade A, B, C as an independent variable and 8 coping subscales as dependent variable showed that there was significant effect on 5 coping types (wishful thinking, seeking social support, self-blame, tension-reduction, and self-isolation). Poorer performer reported using more emotion-focused coping to manage distress relating their disappointing performance (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

From the previous explanation, we can conclude that an academic failure is a stressful event to the students, especially in the Javanese students. The Javanese students perceive academic achievement as the most achievement that they proud of. An academic failure such as fail in exam is a kind of result or outcome which can not be changed because it has already happened. Students whom get poor in grades must manage or cope their stress well so they can prepare the next exam better.

It is fascinating to investigate coping which was performed by the Javanese in facing academic failure context. This research focuses on the Javanese students

because Javanese is the one of large ethnic in Indonesia. Besides that, there are only a few of research which examine academic failure from the local perspective where the society lives in. This study was conducted by Indigenous Psychology approach which emphasizes to examine and view people from the context where they live (Kim & Berry, 1993; in Kim, Yang, & Hwang, 2010). The aim of the study is to explore types of coping which were performed by Javanese students in facing the academic failure.

Method

This study investigates how the Javanese students coped with academic failure. In order to obtain the purpose of the study, we used Indigenous Psychology approach to capture the coping strategies in Javanese students from a contextual perspective (Kim & Berry, 1993; in Kim et. al., 2010).

Instrument

Open-ended questionnaire was used to examine the coping strategies. The participants were asked to complete the open-ended questionnaire. The open-ended questionnaire asked participants about how they coped academic failure. The participants were asked to explain the coping strategies in detail.

Participant

The participants in this study were undergraduate Javanese students in Yogyakarta. A total number of 84 students under-graduate Javanese students in Yogyakarta were asked to participate in this research. The participants consisted of 60 female students and 24 male students with age range 18 to 22 years old.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic categorization. Coding process for all the participant's responses has been done by three coders. The coders discussed any responses to make decisions regarding the themes that emerged from the respondents that can be incorporated into a specific category. A response will be deemed to be a specific category if the three coders agreed that the answer could be included in a particular category.

Result

Thematic categorization analysis showed that there are seven forms of coping which performed by Javanese students who experienced academic failure. The coping strategies are (1) confrontive problem solving, (2) planful problem solving, (3) positive reappraisal, (4) accepting responsibility and blaming, (5) seeking social support, (6) avoidance, and (7) close to God. (Table 1).

Coping Strategies On Students After Experiencing Academic Failure: An Indigenous Study In Javanese Context

The first form of copings is comprises of self-improvement and confrontive problem solving (33,30%). making effort. Positive appraisal (20,24%) The majority students in Java doing as the second form consists of interpreting confrontive problem solving in facing the failure as a positive experience to be academic failure. This form of coping was better and positive thinking. Students who done by students as an effort in solving face failure in academic perceive the the problem and achieving the goal by failure as a lesson to improve themselves. direct action. Confrontive problem solving

Table 1.

Coping Strategies after Experiencing Academic Failure

Form of Coping		Axial	
Confrontive problem solving	33,30%	Self-improvement	28,57%
		Making effort	4,76%
Positive reappraisal	20,24%	Interpreting failure	15,48%
		Positive thinking	4,76%
Planful problem solving	16,67%	Self-introspection	7,14%
		Planing management	3,57%
		Time management	5,95%
Accepting and Blaming	11,92%	Accepting	2,38%
		Blaming	9,52%
Seeking social support	9,53%	Seeking support	8,33%
		Seeking help	1,19%
Avoidance	5,96%	Forgetting problem	1,19%
		Doing something else	4,76%
Close to God	2,38%	Closer to God	2,38%

The next form of copings is planful problem solving (16,67%). This coping consist of self-introspection, planning management, and time management. The planful problem solving was done by students as a rational problem solving techniques by making a plan, evaluating self, and managing time to prevent academic failure. The fourth form is

accepting responsibility and blaming (11,92%). This coping consists of accepting the academic failure and blaming themselves according to the failure that has already happened.

Another type of copings which performed by Javanese students is seeking social support (9,53%). This coping includes seeking support and seeking help from people around them such as parent,

family, or friends. The sixth type of copings is avoidance (5,96%). Javanese students doing avoidance coping by trying to not think the problem seriously and even doing something else to distract their attention from the problem. The last form is close to God (2,38%). In this type of copings, when the Javanese students experiencing academic failure, they coped their disappointment by being close to God and sincere.

DISCUSSION

The result showed that there were seven types of coping strategies which performed by Javanese students after experiencing the academic failure. Actually, the seven forms of coping can be categorized into two types of coping according to their function in managing problem. The first type is problem-focused coping and the second is emotion-focused coping. This finding is consistent with Lazarus (1993) that emphasize on two forms of coping, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping.

The problem-focused coping consists of confrontive problem solving and planful problem solving. That two forms focus on how to solve the problem by doing an action so that it categorizes as problem-focused coping. It consistent with the grant theories from Lazarus and

Folkman (1984) which revealed that problem-focused coping was the strategies which focus on the problem.

In confrontive problem solving, students solve the problem by improve themselves and make more effort. Meanwhile in planful problem coping, the students solve the academic failure by evaluating or introspect themselves in order to make the better plan to achieve a better achievement in future. It also parallels with Folkman and Lazarus, (1988) which explained that there were two types of problem-focused coping, confrontive and planful problem coping.

The emotion-focused coping comprised of positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility and blaming, seeking social support, avoidance, and closer to God. That types of copings focus on how managing the distress emotion by doing many kinds of activities. It consistent with Lazarus and Folkman (1984) which revealed that emotion-focused coping was the strategies which focus on managing the distress emotion.

In positive reappraisal, the students managing the emotion by interpreting and thinking positive on their failure. Javanese students also face the academic failure by accepting responsibility and blaming to reduce their guilty feelings. In maintaining

Coping Strategies On Students After Experiencing Academic Failure: An Indigenous Study In Javanese Context

positive emotion, Javanese students also seek social support from people around them to comfort them. Besides that, some of the Javanese students manage their distress by avoiding the problem such as do not think problem seriously or do something else. The last, some Javanese student close to God by praying to make them ease.

These findings is a bit different prior the grant study of coping strategies from Folkman and Lazarus (1988) which differentiated coping strategies into two types, problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. Especially in the emotion-focused coping types. In the grant theory of coping, emotion-focused coping consisted of distancing, escape-avoidance, accepting responsibility or blame, exercising self-control over the expression or feeling, seeking social support, and positive reappraisal (Folkman et. al, 1986; Folkman & Lazarus, 1988).

The main difference is “close to God” as coping strategies on Javanese students after experiencing academic failure. Even if it can be categorized in emotion-focused coping, it is a bit unique. The action which related to close to God is being sincere and close to God. According to Suseno (1985), Javanese

culture emphasises on respect among human, human with nature, and human with God. All of them are basically the reflections of Javanese spirituality which based on Javanese way of life which is colored with devotion to God. Even if there is a different, there are a similarity in some aspects such as confrontive and planful problem as problem-focused coping. Then positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility and blaming, seeking social support, and avoidance as emotion-focused coping.

Conclusion

There are seven forms of coping in Javanese students after experiencing academic failure; (1) confrontive problem solving, (2) planful problem solving, (3) positive reappraisal, (4) accepting responsibility and blaming, (5) seeking social support, (6) avoidance, and (7) closer to God. The seven forms of coping can be categorized as two types of coping according to the function in managing the problem. The first type is problem-focused coping which focus in solving the problem. It consists of confrontive and planful problem solving. The second type is emotion-focused coping which focus on reducing distress emotion. It includes positive reappraisal, accepting responsibility and blaming, seeking social

support, avoidance, and close to God. In this research, we found close to God as a unique form of coping in Javanese students.

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Coping Strategies On Students After Experiencing Academic Failure: An Indigenous Study In Javanese Context

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