



Differences in Stress Management Among Final Year Students as Seen From Their Place of Residence

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Abstract: This study has the objectives of 1) To determine whether there is a difference in stress management between final year students who live in boarding houses and those with their parents 2) To determine how high the stress management of final year students who live in boarding houses is; 3) To determine how high the stress management of final year students who live with their parents is; 4) To determine which stress management scale items are identified as not optimal and can be proposed as guidance topics. The subjects of this study were final-year Guidance and Counseling students from the 2021 and 2022 intakes who lived in boarding houses and their parents' homes. The number of respondents in this study was 110, with 77 students living in boarding houses and 33 students living at their parents' homes. The scale used was the stress management scale with 30 valid items and a reliability test result using Cronbach's Alpha of 0.935, indicating that this scale was very good. The stress management scale items were tested through assumption tests, namely normality and homogeneity tests. Based on the normality test, the data were not normally distributed and the homogeneity test showed a homogeneous distribution, so the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U Test was used. The results of the study showed that 1) there was a significant difference in stress management between final year students who lived in boarding houses and at their parents' homes with ap value = 0.039. Stress management in final year students who lived at their parents' homes was higher (mean = 71,545) than boarding houses (mean = 66,390); 2) most of the stress management of final year students who live in boarding houses is in the Low category (36%); 3) most of the stress management of final year students who live in their parents' houses is in the Medium category (33%); 4) There are 17 lowest items on the stress management scale that can be used as topics for guidance services.

KEYWORDS: Stress Management, Final Year Students, Boarding House, Parents' House, Residence

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INTRODUCTION

Final-year students face an academic phase marked by increasing demands for completing their studies, particularly thesis writing, research revisions, achieving graduation goals, family demands, and preparing for the workforce. These various demands can be sources of stress that require adequate adaptation and self-management skills (Amri et al., 2025). In this context, stress management is a crucial skill because it helps students identify sources of stress, control their responses to stress, choose coping strategies, solve problems, and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used (Kurniawati & Setyaningsih, 2022). Stress management is not only related to efforts

to reduce stress but also to an individual's ability to maintain psychological function when facing academic demands (Wahyuni et al., 2022). Therefore, the study of final-year student stress management is relevant to the development of psychology and guidance and counseling, particularly in understanding the factors that support students' ability to cope with stress during the completion of their studies.

A student's ability to manage stress is not solely determined by personal characteristics but is also influenced by environmental conditions. Previous research has shown that social support, personal characteristics, coping strategies, academic demands, and the living environment are factors related to an individual's ability to cope with stress (Alkhawaldeh et al., 2023). The living environment is particularly relevant because it serves not only as a physical shelter but also as a source of psychological, social, and emotional support (Wegener & Schmidt, 2024). Students who live with their parents tend to have direct access to emotional support, instrumental assistance, supervision, and a sense of security from their family. Conversely, students who live in boarding houses are required to have greater independence in managing daily needs and facing challenges without the direct presence of family (Narida et al., 2025). These differences in conditions can theoretically create different experiences in coping with and managing academic stress.

Several studies reinforce the importance of the social environment in understanding student stress. Worsley et al. (2021) found that the transition from home to college and independent living can present various sources of stress, such as demands for independence, managing daily needs, living alongside strangers, and economic pressures. Meanwhile, Elik et al. (2024) showed that parental social support was negatively related to academic stress in final-year students, such that the higher the parental social support, the lower the academic stress experienced. These findings suggest that the presence of family and other sources of support in the residential environment play a significant role in helping students cope with stress. However, some of these studies focused more on academic stress, social support, or adaptation experiences, rather than directly examining students' ability to manage stress based on their living conditions.

This study attempts to compare the stress management of final-year students living in boarding houses and with their parents. A comparative approach allows the study to provide an empirical overview of differences in residential contexts related to differences in students' ability to manage stress (Fang et al., 2025). The contribution of this study lies in examining student stress management from a perspective that focuses on individual factors and social support as psychological variables, but also considers the residential context as the student's living environment (Deocades et al., 2025). Therefore, this study aims to determine whether there are differences in stress management between final-year students living in boarding houses and with their parents, to determine the level of stress management in each group, and to identify suboptimal stress management items as proposed topics for tutoring. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions by strengthening the study of the relationship between residential context and final-year students' stress management, as well as practical contributions by providing information that can be used to help students develop stress management skills during the completion of their studies.

METHODS

Design

This study uses a quantitative approach with a comparative design and a cross-sectional approach. The comparative design was used to determine the differences in stress management levels between two groups of final year students based on their residence, namely students living in boarding houses and students living with their parents. Data collection was carried out in one research period without providing treatment or manipulation to participants, so the cross-sectional approach is appropriate to use to describe and compare stress management conditions in both groups at the same time. This design was chosen because it is in line with the research objective to

test whether there are differences in stress management between final year students living in boarding houses and with their parents.

Participants

The participants of this study were final year students of the Guidance and Counseling study program at Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, Class of 2021 and 2022 who were currently writing their theses. These criteria included active final year students aged 18-29 years, registered as students at Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, currently writing their theses, students living in boarding houses, and students living with their parents. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling technique, namely the selection of respondents based on characteristics that match the research objectives.

Data collection was conducted online using Google Forms from March to June 2026. Questionnaires were distributed through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram, and were completed by students who met the research criteria. A total of 110 students participated in this study, consisting of 77 students living in boarding houses and 33 students living with their parents. This participation was voluntary, and data were collected after respondents provided consent to participate in the study.

Instruments

The research instrument used a psychological scale to measure the construct of stress management, namely an individual's ability to recognize sources of stress, understand the impact of stress, control responses to pressure, choose coping strategies, solve problems, adjust, maintain psychological well-being, and evaluate strategies used. The scale was developed based on aspects of stressor identification, skills acquisition, problem solving, practice and monitoring, and strategic evaluation. The instrument used a four-level Likert response format, namely Very Appropriate (SS), Appropriate (S), Not Appropriate (TS), and Very Not Appropriate (STS), with a scoring of 4–1 for favorable items and 1–4 for unfavorable items. The initial instrument consisted of 32 items, with 16 favorable items and 16 unfavorable items. After validity testing, two items were declared invalid, leaving 30 items valid and used in research data collection. Content validity was conducted through expert judgment by the supervisor, while item validity testing was conducted using JASP 0.19.1.0. The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha and obtained a coefficient of 0.935, indicating very high internal consistency. The instrument was used in the context of final-year students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta who lived in boarding houses or with their parents.

Procedure

The study was conducted online among final-year students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. Participants who met the research criteria were invited to participate voluntarily through the distribution of a questionnaire link using social media, such as WhatsApp, chat groups, WhatsApp Stories, and Instagram messages. Data collection was conducted using Google Forms. After receiving research information and stating their willingness to participate, participants completed a research questionnaire consisting of a stress management scale. The scale was provided in a Likert format with four alternative answers: Very Appropriate, Appropriate, Not Appropriate, and Very Not Appropriate. Data were collected over a single research period without any treatment or intervention sessions. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participant data was used solely for research purposes. Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential and used only in the research data processing process. The study was conducted after obtaining research permission as stated in the research document. The thesis does not include

specific information regarding the number or form of ethics committee approval, therefore, this information is not included in this procedure description.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using quantitative statistical analysis in accordance with a comparative research design to examine differences in stress management between final-year students living in boarding houses and students living with their parents. The analysis was conducted using JASP software version 0.19.1.0. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were examined through assumption tests, including normality and homogeneity tests.

The normality test was used to determine whether the data distribution conformed to the parametric analysis assumptions, while the homogeneity test was used to check for equality of variance between the two groups. Based on the results of the assumption check, the data did not meet the normality assumptions, so a variance analysis was performed using the Mann–Whitney U Test as a nonparametric test to compare two independent groups.

Prior to the main analysis, the quality of the instruments was checked through validity and reliability testing. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment, while internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The collected data were then processed and analyzed according to the participants' residential group. The study did not use longitudinal data analysis or multivariate modeling, and the thesis does not describe specific procedures for handling missing data; therefore, these procedures are not included in the analysis description.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis was conducted on 110 final year students consisting of 77 students living in boarding houses and 33 students living with their parents. The results of the Mann–Whitney U test showed a significant difference in stress management between the two groups ($U = 1540.500$; $p = 0.039$). The average stress management score of students living with their parents was 71.545, while that of students living in boarding houses was 66.390. Thus, final year students living with their parents showed a higher level of stress management than students living in boarding houses.

The categorization results show that students living in boarding houses are mostly in the low category (36%), followed by the moderate category (29%), and the very low category (22%). Meanwhile, students living with their parents are mostly in the moderate category (33%), followed by the high category (21%). Nevertheless, both groups still show students across the full range of stress management categories, so housing does not absolutely determine an individual's ability to manage stress.

At the item level, of the 30 items used, 17 (57%) were in the low category and 13 (43%) were in the medium category. No items were in the high, very high, or very low categories. These findings indicate that the stress management aspect of final-year students is still not fully optimal, particularly in abilities related to managing responses to pressure, adapting to stress, and evaluating strategies used in facing the demands of completing a thesis.

Table 1. Results of categorization of boarding houses and parents' homes

Interval	Boarding house		Parents' House		Categorization
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
$98 < X$	5	6%	3	9%	Very high
$83 < X \leq 98$	5	6%	7	21%	Tall
$68 < X \leq 83$	22	29%	11	33%	Currently
$53 < X \leq 68$	28	36%	6	18%	Low
$X \leq 53$	17	22%	6	18%	Very Low
Amount	77	100%	33	100%	

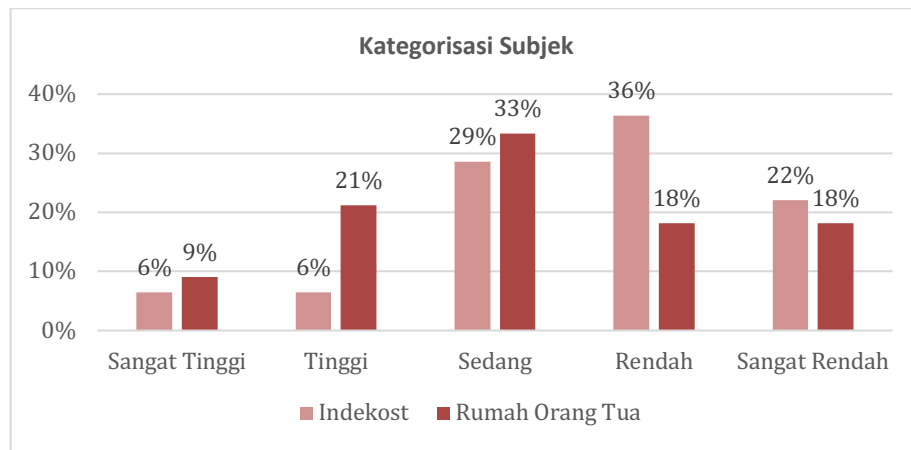


Figure 1. Diagram of Achievement of Boarding House and Parent's Home Variables

Discussion

The results of the study showed a significant difference in stress management between final-year students living in boarding houses and those living with their parents. Students living with their parents had higher stress management than those living in boarding houses. This finding suggests that housing can be a psychosocial context related to students' ability to cope with stress during the thesis completion process. Housing in this study is understood not only as a physical location, but also as an environment that provides or limits students' access to social and emotional resources when facing academic pressure (Lambrix et al., 2024).

Higher stress management in students living with their parents can be explained by the availability of social support within the family environment. When facing obstacles related to research, revision, academic difficulties, or pressure related to graduation goals, students living with their parents have a greater opportunity to receive direct emotional and instrumental support. This finding aligns with Elik et al. (2024) who showed that parental social support is associated with academic stress in final-year students. Cecilia & Suryadi (2024) also found that parental social support is associated with academic resilience in final-year students. Thus, the results of this study reinforce the view that the presence of family support can be a psychological resource that helps students cope with academic stress.

These findings are also supported by research by Juarsih et al. (2025), which demonstrated a relationship between parental social support and stress levels in students working on their final assignments. Students who received more adequate social support had greater resources to cope with the demands of completing their studies. In the context of this study, living with parents allowed for this support to be readily available in everyday life, providing students with an environment that could provide support when facing stress. Therefore, the differences in stress management found can be understood through differences in access to support sources, not solely due to differences in physical residence (Samavati & Veenhoven, 2024).

On the other hand, students living in boarding houses face greater demands for independence. In addition to completing academic demands, students must manage daily needs, time, and various personal matters without the direct presence of family. This situation can add to the burden that must be managed simultaneously with the pressure of writing a thesis. This finding aligns with Deocades et al. (2025), who showed that students living away from family face adjustment demands and require coping strategies to navigate college life. The results of this study extend these findings by demonstrating that differences in residential context are also associated with differences in stress management in students in the final stages of their studies.

However, the results of this study cannot be interpreted as meaning that living with parents always results in better stress management or that living in a boarding house always results in lower stress management. This thesis shows that students living in boarding houses can still have good

stress management if they receive social support from their surroundings, have self-regulation, and use adaptive coping strategies. Conversely, living with parents can also be a source of stress if family relationships are less harmonious or there are high academic demands from parents. This view is in line with Siadari & Rosito (2023), who showed that certain family conditions can be a source of stress for students. Therefore, housing needs to be understood as one context related to stress management, not as the sole factor determining a student's psychological condition.

The difference between this study and some previous research lies in its analytical focus. Previous research in theses has focused more on examining the relationship between academic stress management and specific psychological and social factors, such as parental social support, hardiness, self-disclosure, resilience, and self-efficacy (Wardhani & Panduwinata, 2024). Meanwhile, this study specifically compares stress management based on final-year students' residences, namely boarding houses and parental homes. Thus, this study's contribution lies in using the residential environment as a basis for comparison in understanding final-year students' stress management. These findings extend previous studies by demonstrating that the context of students' daily lives, particularly their residential environment and access to family support, is relevant to consider in understanding their ability to manage academic stress (Buntaran & Darmayanti, 2023).

Item-level findings also indicate that most stress management items fall into the low and moderate categories. This indicates that students still face difficulties in several stress management skills, particularly in identifying sources of stress, controlling emotional responses, adapting to change, selecting planned strategies, and evaluating the effectiveness of strategies used. This finding is important because it demonstrates that the existence of a supportive environment does not automatically lead to optimal student stress management. Students still need personal skills to recognize stress and use stress management strategies effectively. Therefore, the research findings provide a basis for the development of guidance and counseling services, particularly tutoring, aimed at identifying sources of academic stress, regulating emotions, problem-solving, planning the completion of the thesis, and evaluating learning strategies (Nasution & Fitriani, 2024).

Overall, this study reinforces previous findings regarding the importance of social and environmental support in coping with academic stress while also providing a comparative perspective based on residence (Pratiwi et al., 2025). However, because the study used a comparative quantitative design over a single measurement period, the results show differences between groups and cannot be used to infer causal relationships. Other factors such as social support, economic conditions, personality, coping strategies, academic load, self-regulation, and the quality of family relationships may also play a role in stress management and should be considered in future research (Oktara et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study shows that there are differences in stress management between final-year students living in boarding houses and those living with their parents. Students living with their parents demonstrated higher levels of stress management than those living in boarding houses. This finding suggests that the residential environment is a relevant psychosocial context in understanding final-year students' ability to manage stress during the process of completing their studies. The contribution of this study lies in confirming that studies of student stress management need to consider not only individual factors but also the environmental context in which students live their daily lives, particularly access to family support and social resources.

Based on these findings, further research is recommended to consider other factors that may influence stress management, such as social support, coping strategies, self-regulation, economic conditions, academic load, personality, and the quality of family relationships. Longitudinal research can also be conducted to examine changes in students' stress management during the final assignment completion process, as well as research with a broader approach to understand the

mechanisms underlying the differences between students living in boarding houses and those living with their parents. In a practical context, the research findings can form the basis for developing guidance and counseling services for final-year students, particularly services that help students identify sources of stress, develop coping strategies, manage emotions, solve academic problems, and evaluate adaptive stress management strategies.

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