

## Stress Coping Strategies for Overseas Students from East Nusa Tenggara during The Covid-19 Pandemic

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### ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia is part of the 2019 Coronavirus disease pandemic that is taking place all over the world. The number of victims exposed to Covid-19 continues to grow, the government made new several policies, which have consequences in the community. A Pandemic can change individual lives, which can trigger psychological stress. This also happened to overseas students who came from East Nusa Tenggara. There are quite a lot of East Nusa Tenggara students scattered in Yogyakarta, which makes researchers interested in making their research subjects. The purpose of this study was to find sources of stress and an overview of stress-coping strategies for overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study investigation strategy, with three student respondents from East Nusa Tenggara as research subjects. The findings from this study are the sources of stress for East Nusa Tenggara students during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely reduced parental income which affects remittances, parents preferring to set aside money for traditional expenses, difficulty studying online, difficulty with local friends, difficulty going to church, not being able to gather with family, tiring college assignments, feeling imprisoned in a boarding house, afraid of burdening parents with economic matters, worrying about the condition of parents in the village, difficult and afraid to find food. The stress coping strategies of migrant students from East Nusa Tenggara during the Covid-19 pandemic was learning new things, worshipping, watching, listening to podcasts and music, choosing songs according to their mood, playing social media, entertaining themselves with karaoke, sleeping, tidying things up, choose songs as needed, seek entertainment, and sing to express feelings.

**Keywords:** coping stress, overseas students, east nusa tenggara, covid-19 pandemic

### Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia is part of the 2019 Coronavirus disease pandemic which is taking place throughout the world. The disease is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Wikipedia, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic that is happening around the world does not only have an impact on public health but also has an impact on economic conditions, education, and social life. According to World Meters (2021), Covid-19 cases in Indonesia have reached 4,223,094 cases and 142,413 deaths.

The number of victims exposed to Covid-19 continues to grow, forcing the government to issue several policies. According to Kementrian Koordinator Bidang Pembangunan Manusia dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia (2021), the government has made policies to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, such as accelerating the implementation of tracing, testing, and treatment (3T), accelerating vaccination for all Indonesian people, socializing the 5M health protocol (wearing masks), wash hands, keep your distance, stay away from crowds, and reduce mobility). According



to Satgas Covid-19 (2021), another effort has been made to strengthen the prevention of Covid-19 transmission, namely by imposing restrictions on community activities (PPKM). Government policies have consequences in practice in society, such as Working from Home (WFH), studying from home, restrictions on group worship activities, as well as self-quarantine, and so on. This is one of the government's efforts to prevent the spread of the virus from getting higher.

Changes in an individual's life that occurs during a pandemic can trigger psychological pressure, according to the research of Sumakul and Ruata (2020) based on the results of their research the Covid-19 pandemic disrupts the psychological well-being of research participants, such as when they experience fear, stress, and anxiety, it even affects their condition. His psychophysicist Giallonardo, V. (2020) explained in his research that, for people who are in Covid-19 quarantine, we must be able to anticipate a pandemic and complete activities, because it can increase anxiety, stress levels, depression, and related symptoms, with other stresses. This can happen to anyone affected by the pandemic, one of which is overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT).

An overseas student is someone who lives outside their area or moves temporarily to study (Robertson, 2018). Migratory activities are motivated by several things, including push factors and pull factors. This push factor comes from what is in the area of origin, while the pull factor comes from the destination where to wander (Sholik, 2016). East Nusa Tenggara is one of the provinces in Indonesia, according to Pusatstatistik (2021) the total population of East Nusa Tenggara in 2020 is 5,325,566 people consisting of 2,663,771 men and 2,661,795 women. The reasons for East Nusa Tenggara people to migrate are economic, financial and Indonesian life for young people they see the wider world, and the existence of customary pressure from their hometown (Sura, 2019). There are quite a lot of East Nusa Tenggara students spread across Yogyakarta, namely around 14,000 people (Fatoni, 2020), which made researchers interested in making overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara in Yogyakarta as research subjects.

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia caused lecture activities to be carried out online so that before large-scale social restriction measures were implemented, many overseas students decided to return to their respective hometowns, but some chose to stay overseas. Conducted by researchers with five overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) in Yogyakarta, the interviews began on 14 November 2021 to 21 January 2022 and were conducted in person, where according to the sources the reason they stayed overseas was the cost of going back to their hometown is not cheap, there is a feeling of fear of transmitting the Covid-19 virus to family, and there are lecture matters that still require face-to-face meetings such as practicum. These reasons make students survive abroad, with various adjustments in dealing with a pandemic.

The pandemic had an impact on overseas students, Ulfa and Mikdar (2020) in their research stating that the pandemic had an impact on research participants, one of them was even an overseas student out of 96 participants as many as 30 people who still live overseas, pandemic had an impact on daily life, some of them were able to adapt, some felt a more severe impact, the impact felt such as on learning behavior, social interaction, and health behavior. Ratunuman et al. (2021) also explained that students during the Covid-19 pandemic experienced stress, with a prevalence of stress of 32% of respondents, and female students experienced more stress than male students.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with five informants from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), four of them said they felt stressed being overseas students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define stress as an event or event where demands from the environment or demands from internal (physiological or psychological) demands exceed individual adaptive resources. According to Yusup and Faruq (2021), stress is a mental disorder that a person feels because of pressure that comes from a person's failure to fulfill his desires or needs,

this pressure can come from within or from outside. Psychologically, stress is a feeling of tension overshadowed by feelings of fear because there is a threat inside (Yusup & Faruq, 2021).

Overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara who experience stress during the Covid-19 pandemic can use coping strategies to overcome them. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping is an effort made by individuals cognitively and changing behavior wtheheto manage internal anto managee this is considered a burden on the person's resources. Coping is an attempt to overcome difficult conditions, increase efforts to overcome life's problems, and try to reduce or control stress (King, 2016).

According to Sawitri and Wideasavitri (2021) in his research results stated that using the right coping strategy method, respondents could feel a change in conditions, appear to feel calmer, more focused, able to enjoy the activities they were doing again, and there was an increase physically and emotionally for the better. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping strategies can be divided into two, the first is problem-focRutacoping is a strategy or effort made to deal with stress, either due to pressure from the environment or from within, by directing it to the causes of the problem, the second is emotion-focused coping, which is a strategy or effort made to deal with stress, by modifying the function of emotions without any effort to directly change the cause of stress.

Based on the explanation above, it e researchers interested in knowing what are the sour of stress experienced by overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) during the Covid-19 pandemic and how to describe stress coping strategies for overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) during the Covid-19 pandemic. 19. Therefore, this study aims to find out what are the sources of stress experienced by overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) during the Covid-19 pandemic and to find out subjective experiences related to the description of stress coping strategies used by overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Method

In this study, sampling was based on certain criteria with the characteristics of overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara, aged 18-25 years, currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree (S1) in Yogyakarta, and during the pandemic, he was in Yogyakarta. The reason for using a sample of criteria is to get answers and research results thabothth the by studthisthis sstudyhree overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara were used in Yogyakarta and one significant person. The reason for using one significant perperiathat hatee three informants are friends that write with a significant person and come from the same province, namely East Nusa Tenggara.

**Table 1.**  
*Identity of Research Subjects*

Biodata	Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
Initials	Mr	LD	GH
Gender	Woman	Woman	Woman
Age	21 years	20 years	19 years old
Work	Student	Student	Student
Origin	East Nusa Tenggara	East Nusa Tenggara	East Nusa Tenggara

**Table 2.**  
*Identity of Significant Person*

Significant Person	Subjects I, II, & III
Initials	PR
Gender	Woman
Age	20 years
Work	Student
Relationship with the subject	Boarding friends and one area

Collecting data in this study using interviews and nonparticipant observation. The interview method in this study used in-depth semi-structured interviews, to be able to explore the problems felt by the participants in-depth and intact. Observations in this study were carried out by observing during the interviews and using the results of observations when the researchers interacted with the research subjects. In this study, source triangulation was also carried out by comparing data from the results of interviews with research subjects with significant persons, the instrument was used to maintain the reliability of the data.

This research begins with a preliminary process or research conducted in three stages. The first stage of preparation, which the researcher sees a problem or problem, in this study, namely the existence of the Covid-19 pandemic which has an impact on various sectors, after that the researcher examines the theory or results of previous findings related to the problem, after that the researcher looks for the right research method to get results according to the objectives of this study. In the second stage, the researcher looks for research subjects who fit the criteria, then the subject will receive an explanation regarding the purpose of the research and the research process before being asked to sign informed consent, then collect data by observation and in-depth interviews to explore the problems felt by the subject. then copying the results or interview data obtained into verbatim form, after the data is collected the researcher will analyze the data using theme analysis, and for that, the researcher conducts a member check by asking the research subject to read the verbatim transcript, the aim is to strengthen the research results and fulfill research credibility. The third stage is writing reports and reporting research results

## Result and Discussion

In this study, one of the sources of stress found in the three subjects during the Covid-19 pandemic as overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara included reduced remittances from their parents, because during the Covid-19 pandemic their parents' income decreased, one of which was due to difficulties selling crops. Reduced income caused by the Covid-19 pandemic also affected remittances, so the subject had to manage his finances overseas, so that basic needs could be met first. This also happened in the results of Kurniasih (2020) which said that at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, income decreased sharply between 30% - 70% while expenses tended to be the same, this condition made them have to manage family expenses. The reduced income of parents due to the pandemic made subject II feel afraid of burdening parents related to the economy. This feeling arose when the subject asked for remittances overseas. In addition, the n subject I, there are customary fees in their area, making parents prefer to set aside money for customary coscostscause fees for adat are an obligation, there is reciprocity between the community and the expenses are not small because every event there must be expenses for customary costs.

The Covid-19 pandemic made the government provide policies to limit direct social interaction, one of which was on March 15 2020 the government began urging people to keep their distance, on March 31 2020 enacted government regulation no 21/2020 concerning PSBB to be enforced (Ariawan, 2021). This regulation also has an impact on the world of education in Indonesia, one of which is the government providing a policy of conducting lectures online to

reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The existence of this policy made the three subjects feel stressed because they had difficulty taking online lectures and felt that the knowledge they had obtained was not optimal and had difficulty understanding lecture material. According to Lubis et al, student students experience academic stress around 39.2% in the medium category in conducting online lectures. According to research by Ulfa and Mikdar (2020), in his research, it was stated that some students had difficulty understanding material when studying online and were more comfortable studying face-to-face.

Online lectures make many group assignments done online as well, this makes subject III find it difficult to communicate with group mates and finally in each group there, are members who don't help with assignments, in line with research by Nastiti & Hayati (2020), which states that research respondents feel difficulty doing group assignments online because of difficulty communicating with group mates. In addition, because lectures are conducted online, the reference materials for group assignments are incomplete, so the results obtained are less than optimal. Online lectures also cause campuses to be unable to hold practicums, so subject I feel afraid and stressed about being able to apply what has been learned in college when in the world of work later. The abolition of practicum during the Covid-19 pandemic forced lecturers to replace practicum by giving assignments to students, according to the subject, the coursework was very draining of energy, time and, mind and this made the subject feel stressed. Anwar and Tuhuteru (2020), also stated that many students were stressed because the assignments given by the lecturers had to be completed and the assignments were so carried out and did not come from just one lecturer. In line with research by Harahap et al. (2020) which stated that as many as 75% of students experienced moderate academic stress during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Government policies regarding the Covid-19 pandemic made subjects I and II feel stressed because there were restrictions on social interaction, where subjects found it difficult to gather with friends from their area and felt imprisoned in a boarding house. This is in line with research by Gaité et al. (2022) which stated that respondents who did not actively interact socially experienced more stress, depression, and anxiety. In addition, according to Matasikı et al. (2021), the results of the research stated that one of the negative impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic was the temporary suspension of religious activities. The occurrence of religious abolition during the Covid-19 pandemic made a subject I feel stressed because of difficulties going to church. Another impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that made subjects I and II feel stressed was that they could not gather with their families, because during the pandemic they were abroad. When the Covid-19 pandemic was overseas, subjects I and III appeared to feel worried about the condition of their parents at home, in the results of a study by Husky et al. (2020) which stated that as many as 139 students felt moderate to severe stress because they were worried about the health conditions of people who loved ones or loved ones. In addition, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Ulfa and Mikdar (2020) in his research also stated that during a pandemic many shops were closed so choices for foreign food were also limited. This was also felt by subject III, whereas an overseas subject III found it difficult to find food in the boarding house and also appeared afraid of being infected with the Covid-19 virus.

Overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara who experience stress during the Covid-19 pandemic can use coping strategies to overcome them. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984,) coping is an effort made by individuals cognitively and changing behavior to manage certain internal and external demands, where this is considered a burden on the resources of that person. One of the sources of stress for the subject I during the Covid-19 pandemic was that lectures were conducted online, due to difficulties understanding the material and feeling that the knowledge gained during online lectures was not optimal, making the subject stressed thinking about the future and facing the world of work later. This study found how subject I top subjects the stress by focusing on the problems faced or problem for problem-focused coping according to Lazarus and Folkman



(1984) problem-focused coping is a strategy or effort made in overcoming stress, either due to pressure from the environment or from within, by directing it to the causes of the problem. Subjects do stress coping by learning new things and self-study through YouTube, such as seeking new knowledge that is appropriate to their major, namely civil engineering, finding out the latest phenomena, and studying psychology.

This was also done for subject II where subject II defined himself as a person who was active both in speaking and doing activities, the existence of the Covid-19 pandemic limited the subject's activities, made the subject feel stressed, so the subject's way of coping was by focusing on problems that made the subject stressful, namely by playing social media. According to Saputro et al. (2021), their research, he stated that 97% of respondents to their research during the Covid-19 pandemic experienced an increase in their consumption of social media. Playing social media subject II, such as in dancing videos using the TikTok application, is in research by Putra et al. (2021) which states that one of the positive impacts of the TikTok application for its users is as a medium for reducing stress levels in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic. Apart from playing TikTok the subject also coped with stress by making a large number of statuses on the WhatsApp and Instagram applications every day, the subject felt fresher after doing this because he could express what he wanted and felt.

The Covid-19 pandemic is an epidemic that has had an impact on many people including subject I, one of the effects felt is stress. The third way the research subject deal with stress is by focusing on the emotions they feel or emotion-focused coping. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), Emotion-focused coping is a strategy or effort to deal with stress, by modifying the function of emotions without any effort to change the cause of stress directly and emotion-focused coping tends to be done by individuals when they feel unable to make changes in a stressful situation and can only accept the situation because the resources are unable to overcome it. Several ways for the three subjects to I with stress by for care using the emotions felt such as subject I watching anime, YouTube, and also listening to podcasts, to able transfer the negative things that are on their mind. The way for subject II to deal with emotions when stressed during the Covid-19 pandemic is by sleeping and tidying up something messy. The way subject III deals with stress is arey learning new things through the internet, sleeping, and looking for entertainment, while the entertainment he does is watching or listening to music. According to the results of research by Saputro et al. (2021) it st as that 77.5% of the most recent media activities that have been searched for during a pandemic are seeking entertainment. Listening to music during the pandemic was the highest media consumption during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely 62.5% (Saputro et al., 2021).

According to subject I, the easiest way to deal with stress is by listening to music. Research by Aristawati et al. (2022) states that music has a high activity for reducing stress. The music that the subject often listens to is Manggarai regional music, pop music, and also religious music. In addition, the subject also chose songs according to mood, such as listening to Manggarai songs to treat homesickness for the atmosphere of home and the city of Manggarai, listening to overseas songs because they matched what the subject experienced, namely as an overseas student, and also listening to songs about fathers or mothers so they could feel like being at home. Subjects also felt that listening to music and choosing songs that matched their mood could reduce the stress they felt as overseas students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Music is also an alternative for subject II to deal with stress, the subject usually does karaoke with a loud and loud voice, s that what he wants to convey can be represented, the subject's way of dealing with stress has been done before migrating to Yogyakarta, the subject also chooses songs as needed, such as when you feel the need to move, the subject will choose uplifting songs or rock n roll, and after the subject feels tired and needs songs that can calm down, the subject will switch to a calm pop song and sing passionately, while after doing so the subject feels more relieved, in any results of research by Tyasrinestu & Koapaha (2018) which states that

musical activity, especially singing, can reduce a person's stress level. Subject III also coped with stress by singing to express his feelings, this was done since high school because, during high school, the subject lived in a dormitory and was far from his parents. The songs that are often heard are Hindi songs and how to express their feelings by singing loudly, scolding until they cry. The subject felt more relieved and less emotional after doing it.

The weakness of this study is that the three research subjects are female overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara, therefore the results of the research obtained are only based on a woman's perspective, for future researchers who want to research the same topic as this research, to dig up information related to coping stress from a male point of view. In addition, it is a suggestion for future researchers to research related to the customs of East Nusa Tenggara, because in this study it was found the influence of adat on the source of stress felt by overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara

## Conclusion

Based on previous research, it can be concluded that the three research subjects had different and varied sources of stress and stress coping as overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, they have something in common, namely, the three research subjects felt that online lectures and reduced parental income were a source of stress as overseas students from East Nusa Tenggara during the Covid-19 pandemic, besides that the three had similarities in coping with stress that was carried out during the pandemic. Covid-19 is the first booking for entertainment. Subject I seeks entertainment by watching and listening to podcasts, then subject II seeks entertainment by playing social media, and subject III seeks entertainment by watching. The second stress-coping equation among the three subjects is listening to music or karaoke, but among the three there are differences in choosing karaoke songs, for example, subjects choose folk, pop, and spiritual songs. Subject II chose spirit songs, rock n roll, and pop songs, and subject III chose Hindi songs. In addition to the selection of songs, the three of them also have different styles of karaoke, such as subject I karaoke at a standard volume, and subject II must sing karaoke loudly and loudly. Subject III sang loudly, and screamed until he cried, so he could deal with stress during the Covid-19 pandemic

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