

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the following topics will be explained. This chapter contains the background of the study, identification of the problem, limitations and focus of the study, research questions consisting of two questions, aims of the research consisting of two aims, and the importance of the study theoretically and practically.

1.1 Background of The Research

Writing lessons are basic skills that every student must master because they are needed to carry out their obligations to fulfill academic assignments on campus. Of course, learning writing skills is not easy and must involve a very complicated process (Gallagher, 2023), including idea generation, outlining, planning, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing, must also be understood by them in the interim (Chauhan, 2022). Due to the complexity of the writing learning process, many students feel stressed, leading them to depression (Gallagher, 2023). This should deserve more attention from lecturers, because lecturers play a very important role in handling students' academic stress (Hills & Peacock, 2022; Trigueros et al., 2020).

Stress phenomena that occur in these students are actually a common phenomenon in the academic environment (Deng et al., 2022). So that this type of stress is called the term "*Academic Stress*". The term academic stress was first proposed by Kohn & Frazer, (1986) in his journal entitled "An academic stress scale: identification and rated importance of academic stressors". Academic stress is a condition when a physiological and psychological imbalance arises due to too much pressure placed on an individual and his or her inability to meet academic demands (Adom et al., 2020; Jiang et al., 2021). This situation usually happened when there is an imbalance between the resources a student actually has and the demands of the environment, which makes schoolwork and academics more difficult (Abdullah et al., 2020).

Recent preliminary findings from an initial survey conducted by the researcher at the UIN Siber syekh Nurjati Cirebon further confirm that academic stress is not only a theoretical issue but a real phenomenon experienced by students in writing classes. The preliminary survey involved 11 English Department students randomly selected across writing-related courses such as Academic Writing, Qualitative Research, and Quantitative Research, revealed that the majority of students often experience mental fatigue, anxiety, and demotivation caused by writing assignments, short deadlines, and excessive revision tasks. Many students also reported that unclear instructions and inconsistent feedback from lecturers significantly increased their stress levels. Besides that, several respondents also admitted to experiencing physical symptoms such as headaches and sleep disturbances due to academic pressure. These results strongly support that academic stress in the writing classroom context truly occurs, and highlight the urgency of exploring how lecturers identify and manage such stress effectively in their teaching practice. See appendix 6 for more details.

Reported from the main page of the American College Health Association (ACHA) in 2024, a comprehensive survey involving over 55,000 college students revealed alarming mental health statistics. The report stated that 31% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide, and 3% had actually attempted it. These findings underscore a growing concern within higher education institutions regarding student well-being. Notably, one of the major contributing factors identified was *academic stress*, which has been consistently linked to deteriorating mental health and suicidal ideation among college students (Mandias, 2022; Nandagaon & Raddi, 2020). These data highlight the urgent need for educational stakeholders to address academic pressures through supportive interventions and institutional reforms.

Furthermore, do lecturers have a significant role in the phenomenon of academic stress experienced by students? Research by Trigueros et al. (2020) in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* analyzed how lecturer behavior affects students' academic stress. The results show that psychological control behavior from lecturers increases academic stress, while

support for student autonomy reduces this stress. High academic stress has a negative impact on students' motivation, metacognitive learning strategies, and academic performance (Saptono & Matondang, 2023; Shahbaz et al., 2024)

After observing the previously stated research, it makes it clear that there is a close relationship between academic stress, writing, and the role of lecturers. Therefore, this research is very important to do in order to prevent unwanted things from happening. Furthermore Deng et al., (2022); Kötter et al., (2017) also state that stress negatively affects academic performance and could also become continually increasing stress and decreasing performance. Therefore, this research on academic stress has great relevance in efforts to improve student well-being and performance in the academic environment.

The issue of academic stress has been widely discussed by expert researchers from both education and psychology. But academic stress affects each person differently and make various perspectives on this subject, making it an extremely complicated one to explore (Gadzella & Masten, n.d., p. 2). Therefore, the issue of academic stress still needs to be further researched because it has a fairly broad discussion such as, writing anxiety (Huerta et al., 2017; Rohmah & Muslim, 2021), The analysis of academic stress strategies, (Freire et al., 2019; Meneghel et al., 2019; Yavuz, 2020) classification of academic stress levels, (Lakshmi Priya et al., 2022; Monisha et al., 2020; AlShorman et al., 2022.) Academic stress and suicidal ideation, (Bert et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2019; Park et al., 2020; Okechukwu et al., 2022). Academic stress and self regulation, (Ben-Eliyahu, 2019; Eslami et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2022; von Keyserlingk et al., 2022) And also analyze the effects of academic stress on the learning process (Karaman et al., 2019; Kennett et al., 2021; Khan, 2023; Tus, 2020). Because the discussion of academic stress is quite broad, the researcher will emphasize that this research will focus on how lecturers facilitate their students deal with the overall phenomenon of academic stress in writing classes that are based on academic writing, and not creative writing.

In examining the causes of stress and its influence on students' academic performance, Abdullah et al. (2020) provided valuable insights into stress-related factors and their academic implications. However, the study did not clearly identify

the levels of academic stress experienced by the respondents, leaving a gap in understanding the intensity of stress among students. This aspect was more systematically addressed by Nurcholis et al. (2023) who categorized academic stress into three distinct levels: mild, moderate, and severe. Furthermore Abdullah et al. (2020) also failed to elaborate on the respondents' stress reactions to academic stressors, making it difficult for readers to fully understand how students respond emotionally or behaviorally to these pressures.

According to Gadzella & Masten, (n.d.) reactions to stress consist of four categories, namely: Physiological (physiological reactions), Emotional (emotional reactions), Behavioral (behavioral reactions), Cognitive Appraisal (cognitive assessment). In handling it, many strategies have been researched and recommended by researchers such as (Hj Ramli et al., 2018).Hj Ramli et al., (2018) in his research recommends several strategies and techniques that students should use to overcome academic stress. Unfortunately, this research does not contain anything about the role of lecturers or strategies that lecturers can use to overcome this phenomenon of academic stress. In fact, social support (including teacher support) is very closely related to academic stress (Salmon & Santi, 2021).

In dealing with academic stress, the level of academic stress is very important to know (Nurcholis et al., 2023). With detailed and precise academic stress level data, appropriate and effective treatment will also be produced. In data analysis, detail data is vital for identifying important features or patterns within a dataset. (Ji et al., 2017) state that a fast shapelet discovery algorithm is proposed to identify important data points (IDPs) that can represent class characteristics of time series. This approach reduces the time it takes to find shapelets while maintaining classification accuracy rates. This is closely related not only to the level of stress levels that the author must mention, but also the detailed output or stress reactions experienced by students. In a psychology journal written by Wulandari & Kumalasari, (2022) stated that social support is very important in dealing with the phenomenon of academic stress, social support such as from lecturers, family and relatives is really needed by students who experience academic stress. Therefore, it can be stated that the higher the social support the lecturer provides, the higher the

academic resilience of students (Wulandari & Kumalasari, 2022)

This research has been supported by several studies (House et al., 2020; Poots & Cassidy, 2020; Wulandari & Kumalasari, 2022) They agreed to state that to solve the problem of academic stress in students perfectly, a lot of contributions are needed from all parties such as lecturers, parents, siblings, friends, family, and the students themselves (peer-helping). In this research, researchers will focus on exploring lecturers' strategies for dealing with academic stress in the writing learning process at one of the universities in the city of Cirebon, Indonesia. Learning writing is allegedly one of the lessons that often causes academic stress (Akhtar et al., 2020; Ferolino et al., 2022). Not only that, academic writing often causes other similar phenomena which are still classified as academic stress, namely writing anxiety (Kurniasih et al., 2020; Rabadi & Rabadi, 2020). Academic writing as a factor causing stress was also stated by Russell-Pinson & Harris (2019) In their research, one of the participants they interviewed, a doctoral candidate from South Asia, said that writing was something "scary" to the point that he felt stressed and had to lock himself up and felt he lost motivation for a while.

In this research, writing is not just something that happens in formal Writing classes. It is also a key part of other university subjects that focus on thinking, analyzing, and reflecting academically. Writing shows up in many forms, like research reports, discourse analysis papers, reflective essays, and academic journals. As stated by Richardson and St.Pierre (2005), writing is a way to understand things, writing is a tool to discover and build meaning, especially in qualitative research. This idea is also supported by Wolcott (as cited in Woods & Sikes 2022), who said that in qualitative research, "writing and the research can't be seperated," meaning that the process of analyzing and writing are deeply connected. That's why in courses like Qualitative Research Methodology, Discourse Analysis, and Literary Studies, writing is used intensively, and both students and lecturers take part in writing as a major part of learning. From this perspective, it makes sense that research on how lecturers deal with students' academic stress in writing activities is not only relevant in Writing classes, but also in other courses where writing is done regularly and deeply.

The basic reason for doing this research is because academic writing is one of the essential skills that students must master. However, the process of learning academic writing often creates significant stress. Based on previous research, students who experience academic stress tend to show decreased academic performance and low writing quality. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that influence academic stress in students, as well as find effective strategies to reduce this stress and support them in developing good academic writing skills.

1.2 Identification of the Issues/Phenomenon

Based on the background of the academic stress phenomenon which has been explained above, researchers will identify important and crucial parts that will become research material, namely:

1. Students often experience intense academic stress in writing classes, which calls into question how lecturers *perceive, interpret, and respond to* such conditions within their teaching practices.
2. The availability and variation of strategies among lecturers in responding to academic stress are still under-researched, especially in the context of writing classes.
3. While academic stress among students has been extensively studied, there remains a lack of research that captures the subjective experience and meaning-making processes of lecturers who navigate and respond to this phenomenon in writing classrooms.

1.3 Delimitations and focus of the study

This study has several limitations that need to be noted. First, the research sample only includes two lecturers who teach subjects academic, and only one lecturer was used as the primary data in the observation of the writing class, so the findings of this research cannot be generalized to lecturers from other subjects. Second, the writing referred to in this research is academic writing and not creative writing. This is based on the findings of previous researchers which stated that academic writing has a big potential for academic stress. Apart from that, third, the focus of this research is to identify and understand the experiences of two writing

lecturers regarding their steps or their plans in managing the academic stress experienced by their students, not to explore how stressed the students are or how many students are stressed. This research seeks to explore the strategies used by lecturers to manage and reduce stress as well as the factors that contribute to academic stress in the context of teaching writing among their students. In addition, this study also has delimitations related to the preliminary research conducted prior to the main data collection. The preliminary research was conducted only to confirm the presence of academic stress among students in writing classes. It involved 11 English department students at UIN Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon selected through a random sampling technique. Therefore, the results of the preliminary survey are not intended to represent the entire student population but serve merely as supporting evidence that academic stress actually occurs within the observed learning context.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions proposed are aligned with the main objective of the study on how the teacher strategy prepared to handle the academic stress issues among student in writing course. The research questions are as follow:

1. What strategies do writing lecturers design and use to help students cope with academic stress in writing classes?
2. How do writing lecturers implement those strategies in managing students' academic stress during the teaching and learning process?

1.5 Aims of The Research

The following are research aims that are in accordance with the research questions above:

1. To explore and interpret the lived experiences of writing lecturers in understanding and responding to academic stress among their students.
2. To analyze the implementation process of stress-reducing strategies by writing lecturers during teaching and learning activities.

1.6 Significances of The Research

The findings of this study are expected to have several theoretical and practical benefits.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

1. This research contributes to the development of theories about pedagogical strategies used by lecturers in responding to students' academic stress, especially in the context of learning to write which is known to have high cognitive stress.
2. The results of this study can also enrich the literature on the dynamics of interactions between lecturers and students, and how these interactions can be interpreted as part of a supportive approach in dealing with psychological challenges in the classroom.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

1. For Lecturer

This research can provide practical insights for lecturers, especially those teaching writing courses, about effective and responsive strategies in dealing with students' academic stress, so that the learning process becomes more supportive and adaptive.

2. For Student

The results of this study can help students understand that academic stress in learning to write is common, and that there are teaching strategies from lecturers that can help them deal with it better.

3. For University Stakeholders

This research can be a basis for consideration for educational institutions in designing training or professional development programs for lecturers, so that they are more sensitive and ready to deal with students' psychological problems in an academic context.

4. For Researcher

This research can serve as an initial reference for the development of further in-depth studies on the relationship between teaching strategies, academic stress, and student learning performance, especially in the context of writing skills-based courses.

1.7 Theoretical foundation

Academic stress among students is not a strange thing and is something that is very easy to find. Many researchers have concluded that this occurs due to many factors, and one way to minimize it requires a lot of contributions from many supporting parties as well as appropriate strategies and steps in dealing with it (Salmon & Santi, 2021; Trigueros et al., 2020). This topic discusses the big picture of academic stress as well as several strategies that have been discussed by previous researchers. Exploring lecturers' efforts and strategies in reducing academic stress among students will provide a new perspective for other researchers regarding academic stress regarding how lecturers, as the main foundation for classroom learning, are responsible for their students.

1.7.1 Understanding Academic Stress

1.7.1.1 Academic Stress

In several studies, academic stress defined as a condition when a physiological and psychological imbalance arises due to too much pressure placed on an individual inability to meet academic demands (Adom et al., 2020; Jiang et al., 2021). In the other side, Bedewy & Gabriel (2015) also defines academic stress as how students perceive their academic burden, academic pressures, time restrictions to complete tasks, and academic self-perception. Of the two academic definitions of stress, there are slightly different points of view including the subject of the two academic definitions of stress, Adom et al., (2020); Jiang et al., (2021) defines academic stress more broadly and can be related to all contexts without mentioning the specific subject of academic stress. While Bedewy & Gabriel, (2015) mentions specifically and in detail, namely 'Students as the subject of academic stress. Which

in fact according to (Wieczorek, n.d.) in his book entitled “*Academic Teachers Under Stress in The Publish or Perish Era*” stated that academic stress does not only happen to students, but also teachers or lecturers. In this case, researchers will draw conclusions on the definition of academic stress as a phenomenon as well as a condition where a person feels stressed because of academic load. This is because this research does not only focus on students, but also teachers as the research object.

1.7.1.2 Symptoms of Academic Stress

A comprehensive list of the psychological and physiological aspects of stress experiences has been provided in earlier research (Schat et al., 2005). But stress is a personal experience. Studying this subject is quite complex, and there are several perspectives on it. There are various stressor types and stressor-related reactions that overlap and combine to produce a variety of behaviors. However, stress as a response refers to the physiological, emotional, or behavioral manifestations caused by stressors (Selye, 1978). Analyzing the consequences of stress, it has been demonstrated that stress is linked to symptoms that are emotional, behavioral, and cognitive (Di Benedetto et al., 2020; Scharp & Dorrance Hall, 2019).

The physiological, emotional, or behavioral reactions brought on by stressors are referred to as the academic stress response (Fimian et al., 1989). Numerous physiological reactions, including fast cardiovascular activation, elevated blood pressure, elevated respiratory rate and corticosteroid levels, sweating, tremor, headaches, weight loss or gain, body aches, and poor sleep quality, can be brought on by an acute stressor. Additionally, it elicits a subjective experience that is linked to negative affect (irritability, agitation, fear, anxiety, and guilt) and cognitive reactions (perceived stress, negative thoughts, worry, and feeling of uncontrollability). It can also result in behavioral reactions, such as crying, abusing oneself or others, and smoking (Garett et al., 2017).

1.7.1.3 Academic Stress Causes

The causes of academic stress have been widely discussed by previous researchers, there are many factors that cause academic stress. The following are several researchers who discuss the factors that cause academic stress:

According to Kurniasih et al., (2020), The document does not explicitly mention “academic stress” as a separate category, but it does discuss factors that can contribute to stress in an academic context, particularly related to writing. The causes of academic stress can be inferred from the factors associated with writing anxiety, which include:

1. **High Academic Expectations:** Pressure to perform well academically can lead to stress.
2. **Fear of Negative Evaluation:** Concerns about grades and feedback from teachers can create anxiety.
3. **Lack of Preparation:** Insufficient knowledge or skills in a subject area can contribute to feelings of inadequacy and stress.
4. **Time Management Issues:** Struggling to meet deadlines or manage multiple assignments can lead to increased stress levels.
5. **Peer Competition:** The competitive nature of academic environments can add to stress, as students may feel the need to outperform their peers.

These factors can create a stressful academic environment, impacting students’ overall well-being and performance, (Kurniasih et al., 2020). Next, according to Pascoe et al., (2020), Academic Stress in students is primarily caused by a variety of academic-related factors. These include:

1. **Ongoing Academic Demands:** Students face normative stressors such as continuous academic pressures, deadlines, and performance expectations, which can lead to high levels of stress .
2. **Perceived Lack of Support:** A lack of perceived social support, particularly from faculty and the educational environment, can exacerbate stress levels. Students who feel more connected to their school and

supported by faculty tend to experience less anxiety and engage in fewer risky behaviors .

3. **Sleep Disturbances:** Stress is also linked to insufficient sleep, which is recognized as a serious health risk. Poor sleep can be both a cause and a consequence of stress, creating a cycle that negatively impacts students' well-being .
4. **Mental Health Issues:** The paper notes that ongoing stress can lead to more serious mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression, which can further contribute to the overall stress experienced by students.
5. **Physical Health Impacts:** High levels of academic-related stress can lead to unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as reduced physical activity and poor eating habits, which can contribute to stress and its associated health problems.

1.7.1.4 Academic Stress' Impacts

Research conducted by Kötter et al., (2017) in his paper entitled “Perceived Medical School Stress of Undergraduate Medical Students Predicts Academic Performance: An Observational Study” Kötter et al., (2017) stated several impacts of academic stress on students, namely:

1. Decreased Academic Performance

The finding of a relationship between academic stress and academic performance by Kötter et al., (2017) showed similar results to other studies. Research respondents who experienced poor stress (distress) showed positive results of decreased academic performance.

2. Vicious circle effect

Prolonged academic stress creates a bad pattern that Kotter calls the vicious circle effect. The term “*vicious circle*” refers to the negative, mutually reinforcing cycle between ineffective case-based collaborative learning (CBCL) and student disinterest or inactivity (due to stress) in the learning process. Kotter specifically notes that when the case given in CBCL is uninteresting, too difficult, or inappropriate to the students' level, this

causes students to become passive or disengaged. When students are not active, lecturers or facilitators find it difficult to facilitate meaningful discussions. Conversely, because the discussion becomes meaningless or disjointed, students are even less motivated to engage. This creates a vicious circle where ineffectiveness in one aspect worsens the other aspects continuously.

This research emphasizes the need for interventions to manage academic stress, such as stress management training, to help students break this vicious cycle and improve their performance and well-being (Kötter et al., 2017).

1.7.1.5 Academic Stress Management Theory

There are many strategies or steps that have been researched and developed to deal with academic stress, whether for lecturers or for students, here are several strategies for dealing with academic stress that can be used by students or taught by lecturers to students:

1.7.1.5.1 Coping Strategies

Coping strategies refers to the behavioral and cognitive strategies that individuals employ to manage and regulate individual stress in response to academic challenges (Aina & Wijayati, 2019; Lazarus, 1984). Coping strategies work by providing individuals with methods to manage their emotional and psychological responses to stress. They can be categorized into different types, such as emotional support, instrumental support, and self-distraction, which help individuals either process their feelings or take practical steps to alleviate stress. The effectiveness of these strategies can vary based on personal preferences and the specific stressors faced (Aina & Wijayati, 2019). According to (Struthers et al., 2000) There are two types of coping strategies: Problem-Focused Coping (PFC) and Emotion-Focused Coping (EFC). PFC involves thoughts and actions aimed at altering the source of stress, while EFC focuses on managing the emotional distress associated with stressful events.

1.7.1.5.2 Counseling Guidance

Guidance counseling is the most common technique used by agency managers in dealing with various problems including academic stress in the school environment. Research conducted by Daulay et al. (2022) confirms the important role of guidance and counseling services in helping students deal with academic stress. This study use a literature review of 21 relevant studies within the last five years (2017-2022), it was found that five out of ten types of counseling services proved effective in reducing students' academic stress symptoms, namely information services, orientation services, group guidance, group counseling, and individual counseling. These services are applied with diverse approaches such as stress management techniques, mind mapping, problem solving, *rational emotive behavior therapy*, and *art therapy*. The results demonstrate that guidance and counseling services not only help students manage academic stress, but also contribute to improving self-efficacy, learning motivation, academic self-concept, and adjustment to the learning environment, especially in the context of online learning during the pandemic. Thus, guidance and counseling services have a strategic role in supporting students' mental health and academic success.

1.7.1.5.3 Locus of Control (LOC)

Locus of control (LOC) is basically not a special strategy prepared to resolve academic stress, but rather a psychological concept about a person's perspective on an event that happens to him. According to social learning theory, (Rotter, 1966) first proposed the concept of locus of control (LOC) in the middle of the 1960s to characterize the widespread belief that one's own activities will be successful in mastering or controlling the environment. Locus of Control refers to a person's perception of the main cause of an event in life (Masyita Suherman et al., 2019). However, research conducted by Masyita Suherman et al., (2019); Pransiska Liona, (2021) revealed that there is a close relationship between locus of control and academic stress, where people with an internal locus of control tend to feel less stressed because they believe they have the power to change the situation. In contrast, people with an external locus of control tend to feel more anxious and helpless because they think everything is out of their control.

Therefore, the researcher believes that in the context of this research, knowing and being aware of the Locus of Control in individuals (students) can help how to implement appropriate steps in dealing with academic stress.

1.7.1.5.4 Role of lectures in Managing Academic Stress

It has been explained previously in background research that lecturers have a very important role in solving academic stress problems in their students. In this sense, the role that teachers play can be extremely important towards the development of positive attitudes that generate a climate oriented towards living a series of experiences that promote personal abilities, fun, self-knowledge, internal motivation, transference and learning (Trigueros et al., 2020).

1.8 Previous Studies

This section will explain important parts of previous research which are closely related to the main research topic, namely academic stress. This section is divided into 3 main parts:

1.8.1 Understanding Academic Stress: Signs, Causes, and Impacts.

(Gadzella & Masten, n.d.) in their research entitled “An Analysis of The Categories In The Student-Life Stress Inventory” suggests signs of academic stress in students. The purpose of paper was to assess the nine categories of the Student-life Stress Inventory (SSI), categories were stressors (Frustrations, Conflicts, Pressures, Changes, and Self- imposed) and four were reactions to stressors (Physiological, Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Appraisals). This research used quantitative research methods and involved 336 undergraduate participants, 111 men and 225 women. while the research instrument uses the Student-life Stress Inventory (SSI). The results of his research found that the signs or also called symptoms of academic stress according to (Gadzella & Masten, n.d.) or he also calls it ‘human reactions to stress are divided into 4 categories which can be categorized into physiological, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive reactions:

1. **Physiological Reactions:** Academic stress can lead to various physical symptoms, which may include increased heart rate, fatigue, and other stress-

related health issues. The study indicates that students experiencing severe stress reported higher physiological reactions compared to those with mild or moderate stress levels.

2. **Emotional Reactions:** Students under academic stress often experience heightened emotional responses, such as anxiety, frustration, and feelings of being overwhelmed. The emotional impact is significant, with severe stress correlating with higher emotional distress .
3. **Behavioral Reactions:** Academic stress can lead to changes in behavior, such as withdrawal from social activities, decreased academic performance, and changes in study habits. The study found that students with severe stress exhibited more pronounced behavioral reactions compared to their less stressed peers.
4. **Cognitive Appraisal:** The way students appraise or evaluate their stressors can also be affected. Those under severe stress may struggle with cognitive processes, leading to difficulties in decision-making and problem-solving. However, the study noted that cognitive appraisal did not show significant differences across stress levels, suggesting that the evaluation of stressors may be more stable.

After knowing the signs of academic stress stated by Gadzella & Masten, (n.d.) above, this will make it easier for teachers to assess, understand, and resolve the academic stress problems of students in their class.

The next research is research on the causes of academic stress created by Jain & Singhai, (2017), their research entitled “Academic Stress Amongst Students: A Review Of Literature”. This research aims to analyze the conceptual framework of academic stress, identify the causes of stress among students, and explore ways to manage this stress. The method used is a literature review which includes various previous studies on academic stress. Jain & Singhai, (2017) in their paper stated that the stress-causing factors identified in this research include high academic pressure such as: exams and assignments, expectations of parents and teachers to achieve high grades, pressure to be an all-round individual, lack of appropriate counseling channels, pressure from peers, as well as an imbalance between

academic load and time available for studying. In addition, stress is also exacerbated by a lack of support from parents and teachers, pressure to meet social demands, and fear of failure. (Jain & Singhai, 2017). This is in line with the research that was included in the previous background research and theoretical foundation sections.

The next research is research on the effects caused by academic stress. This research is entitled “*Family and Academic Stress and Their Impact on Students’ Depression Level and Academic Performance*” which is conducted by Deng et al., (2022). This study aims to analyze the influence of academic stress and family stress on students’ depression levels and its impact on their academic performance. The method used is a non-probability sampling technique with a five-point Likert scale questionnaire, as well as analysis using structural equation modeling Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM). Research results show that excessive academic stress can cause various negative impacts, including physical health disorders such as fatigue, loss of appetite, and digestive problems, as well as mental health disorders such as: anxiety, depression, and decreased motivation to study (Deng et al., 2022). This impact ultimately affects students’ academic performance, causing lower grades, increased absenteeism, and the possibility of dropping out of college.

1. Teaching Strategies to Address Academic Stress

Regarding teaching strategies to avoid academic stress, there is a study that has more or less the same focus as this research. The research is entitled “*Instructor Strategies to Alleviate Stress and Anxiety among College and University STEM Students*”. The research was written by (Hsu & Goldsmith, (2021). The research objectives outlined in the paper focus on identifying evidence-based strategies that instructors can implement to alleviate student stress and anxiety in academic settings, particularly within STEM disciplines.

The methods involve a review of existing literature and the synthesis of various classroom interventions that have been shown to impact student well-being. Instructors are encouraged to adopt several strategies, including fostering effective study habits and time management skills, creating an inclusive and empowering

classroom atmosphere, and connecting with students on a personal level. This paper conclude that, they should modify instructional techniques and assessment methods to reduce testing anxiety and promote a supportive learning environment. By implementing these steps, instructors can help students develop coping mechanisms and improve their overall academic performance and quality of life (Hsu & Goldsmith, 2021a).

2. The Role of Educators in Managing Academic Stress

The study conducted by (Willis et al., (2021) under the title “The role of teachers in mitigating student stress to progress learning” examine more deeply the importance of the role of lecturers in dealing with academic stress. The study using a phenomenological methodology to explore the perspectives and experiences of teachers regarding student wellbeing and academic pressures. The key methodologies used in the research include: Semi-Structured Interviews, Data Analysis, Interpretivist Paradigm. These methodologies were chosen to generate a rich understanding of how teachers manage the dual challenges of supporting student wellbeing and addressing academic stress. The study involved a total of 22 participants who were teachers. This included 10 teachers from secondary schools, 10 from primary schools, and 2 specialist teachers who worked across both primary and secondary contexts. Based on the results of this research, the research results concluded that the critical role educators play in recognizing, addressing, and mitigating academic stress among students, ultimately contributing to a more supportive and effective learning environment (Willis et al., 2021).

Previous studies have shown that academic stress is a common problem experienced by university students. These studies reveal that this stress can affect students’ physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive conditions. Some of the contributing factors that often arise include the pressure of assignments and exams, high expectations from parents and lecturers, as well as lack of emotional support and unbalanced study time. In addition, the study also highlighted the importance of educators’ role in creating a supportive learning environment through adjustments to teaching and assessment methods.

In contrast to previous studies that generally focus on the impact of academic stress and its causative factors from the students' perspective, this study focuses more on the roles and strategies of lecturers, especially writing lecturers, in dealing with and handling students' academic stress in the classroom. This research not only looks at the effects of stress, but also directly observes classroom practices and explores lecturers' awareness and processes in implementing stress management strategies. With this approach, this research makes a new contribution to the field of academic stress studies, namely from the side of educational practitioners (lecturers) and not only from the experience of students as subjects who experience stress.

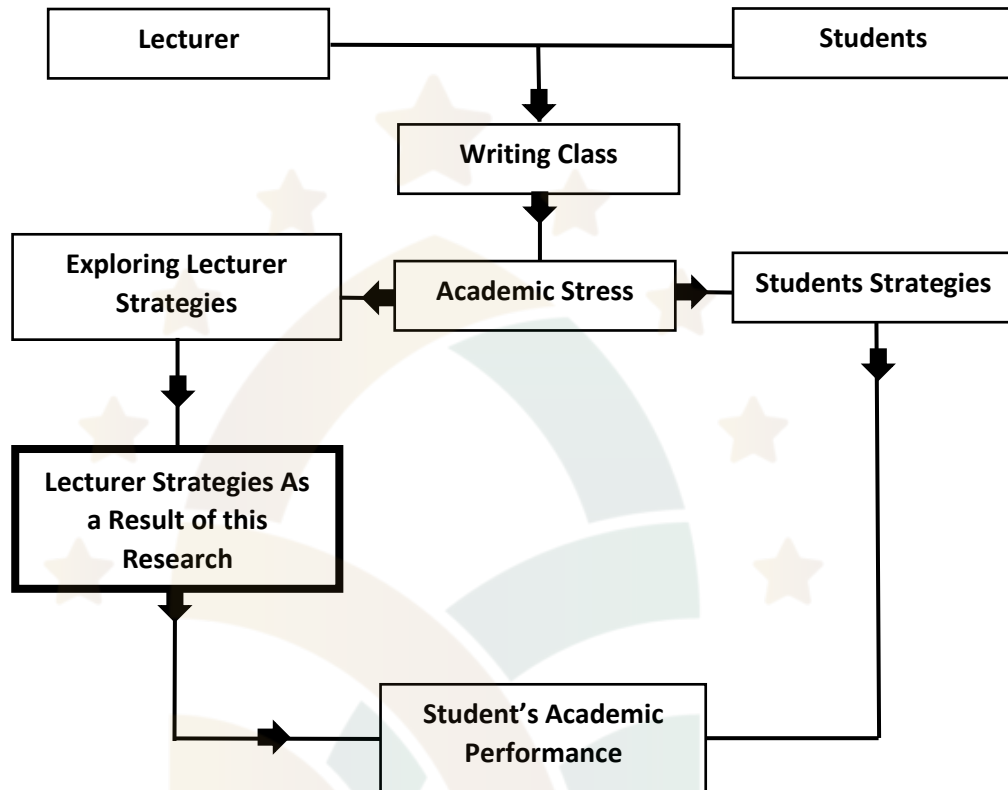
1.9 Frame of Thought

Based on the main problem topic, supporting theories and previous research findings regarding academic stress in students in writing classes, as well as the signs, causes and impact on student academic performance. Therefore, as figures who take crucial roles, it is important for teachers to know and understand more about the appropriate steps in dealing with academic stress in students.

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Figure 1 Frame of thought



1.10 Research Method

1.10.1 Research Design And Steps Of The Research

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with a phenomenological research design. The selection of this method is based on the research objective to deeply understand the strategies used by lecturers in dealing with academic stress among students in the writing learning process. The phenomenological research design was chosen to focus the research on the subjective experiences of individuals (in this case, lecturers), in dealing with academic stress situations. The phenomenological approach allows researchers to explore the meaning of the experience and understand the strategies that emerge from the perspective of the lecturer himself. Researchers see that this design provides a broad and deep insight

into how lecturers manage the academic stress experienced by their students, as well as how they apply certain strategies in the writing learning process.

Before conducting the main qualitative research, the researcher first carried out a preliminary research in the form of a short survey to identify whether academic stress actually occurred among students in writing classes. This preliminary stage was intended to validate the relevance of the research problem and to ensure that the chosen phenomenon was empirically grounded. The results of the preliminary survey then served as supporting evidence for the focus of the present qualitative study. The design of this study is similar to the research design conducted by (Wirdayanti, 2023; Masitoh, 2020) who also researched academic stress among students. In this study, the steps that the researcher will take include several important stages, namely:

1. Conducting a preliminary survey to confirm the existence and patterns of academic stress among English Department students in the writing context
2. Identify the problem
3. Determine research questions
4. Design research steps: research source, type of research, data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques
5. Review the literature of previous research on related issues
6. Data collection through semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations non participants
7. Data analysis.

These steps are taken based on a book written by (Mirhosseini, 2020).

1.10.2 Sources and types of data

The data source in this study is 2 writing lecturers in UIN Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon. The selection of lecturers as a source of data is due to their role as the key to managing students' academic stress in the context of teaching writing (Martincová & Bílá, 2023). The selection of writing lessons as a subject to be

researched is because according to Akhtar et al. (2020; Ferolino et al., 2022) Academic writing learning is allegedly one of the subjects that most often causes academic stress. Data collection will use the interview method with semi-structured interviews for samples, then it will be strengthened by data collection with observation methods to strengthen the data from the interviews that have been taken. The data obtained is a primary data type, Primary data in qualitative research refers to the data collected directly through various methods such as interviews and observations. This data is original, specific to the research problem, and often provides in-depth insights into the phenomena being studied (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). The selection of the primary data type as the research data is in line with the researcher's goal, which is to obtain original, rich, in-depth, and relevant data about the academic stress phenomenon to be discussed. Primary data allows researchers to gain a deep and rich understanding of the context, process, and experience of the individual or group being studied. This data often reveals nuances and complexities that may be missed in secondary data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

In addition to the main qualitative data obtained from interviews and classroom observations, the researcher also collected supporting data from a preliminary survey. This survey involved 11 English Department students selected through random sampling. The survey data served only as background validation to confirm the existence of academic stress phenomena in writing classes, not as the main source of analysis in this research.

1.10.3 Data collections techniques and instruments

Data collection techniques are an important main step in research, because the main purpose of research is to obtain data. This study uses two data collection techniques, namely semi-structured interviews and observation:

1. Interview

This study employed interviews with writing Lecturers to gather significant insights and uncover personal details pertinent to the research. Through interviews, researchers could pose specific questions to delve deeper

into the subject matter (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Open-ended questions were utilized to enable participants to freely express their thoughts without being influenced by the researcher's perspectives or prior studies. Such questions allow participants the flexibility to respond in various ways (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Lecturer interviews were conducted using a one-on-one interview technique. This method involves the researcher asking questions and recording responses from a single participant at a time. Multiple one-on-one interviews can be utilized in a qualitative study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The research instrument for this interview has 22 questions related to: strategies for dealing with academic stress, academic stress, writing, and learning process. For details, see appendix 1.1

2. Observation

Observation is a data collection technique in this research uses the unstructured observation method, which allows researchers to collect data directly from the participants' natural environment. The observation used is observation non participant. Researchers will observe directly how the sample lecturers teach but will not participate either as lecturers or as students. Observation provides the opportunity for researchers to see and record participant behavior and interactions in the actual context without intervention or changes in conditions that might occur in other methods (Patton, 2023). This method is very useful in gaining a deep and detailed understanding of the phenomenon being researched, as well as providing rich and authentic data. Creswell, (2017) underlines that observation can reveal hidden aspects of social interactions and behavior that may not be detected through interviews or questionnaires. In this research, observations are carried out systematically and unstructured, what happens in the field will be recorded and written based on what it was. See Column for observations in appendix 2.

In the initial design of this study, both lecturers were to be observed as part of the study's original plan. But one of the lecturers is no longer teaching

writing courses because of uncontrollable circumstances. Therefore, only the lecturer who is now teaching writing was the subject of direct classroom observation. In spite of this drawback, the researcher conducted thorough, semi-structured interviews with both lecturers to guarantee data triangulation. The interview data from both lecturers provide insightful information on their individual approaches to managing students' academic stress in writing classes, thus the analysis retains its legitimacy and applicability.

3. Preliminary Survey

Prior to the main data collection, the researcher conducted a preliminary survey using a short Likert-scale questionnaire through google form to identify students' experiences of academic stress related to writing courses. The survey contained 13 items focusing on emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and physiological indicators of academic stress. Data were collected from 11 students through random sampling. The findings from this preliminary survey provided empirical evidence that academic stress was indeed present in the studied context, which justified the continuation of the qualitative inquiry.

4. Documentation

Researchers will also conduct documentation. According to Sugiyono (2016), Documentation is a technique that aims to obtain data so that the meaning of each action can be sought through qualitative research using documentation techniques. In this context, the term "documentation" refers to gathering information by gathering and documenting pertinent facts to demonstrate that the researcher has done research. Therefore, for this study's documentation, the researcher gathers all the information gathered from observations and interviews in the form of pictures or videos of to aid in the gathering of data and assist the researcher in presenting it.

1.10.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The qualitative data analysis in this study was guided by an inductive approach, where patterns, themes, and categories were derived directly from the data rather than imposed from prior theory. This is in line with the purpose of the

study, which aimed to explore how lecturers write about managing students' academic stress based on their real-world teaching experiences. The researcher analyzed data from interviews and observations by carefully interpreting the language and meaning in participants' responses. This approach allowed the researcher to stay close to the data and extract insights that were based on the lecturers' perspectives and experiences. close to the data and extract insights grounded in the lecturers' perspectives.

The stages of data analysis in this research are adopted from the book "*Qualitative Data Analysis-A Methods Sourcebook*" by (Miles et al., 2013 pp. 31-32) used include:

1. Data Condensation

The data obtained from the interview results will be very much with a broader topic, so initially the researcher will record everything carefully and after that, the data will be reduced and processed including summarizing, selecting key elements, and identifying emerging themes and patterns. In this stage, the researcher began by examining all the information collected from various sources, such as interviews, observation, and documentation video involving writing lecturer in writing class. In the data condensation process, researchers not only reduce data manually, but also utilize language model-based AI, namely ChatGPT, as a tool to assist in initial coding and systematic theme organization. The use of ChatGPT as a research assistant is collaborative in nature; it does not replace the role of researchers, but rather speeds up the initial coding process and helps reveal patterns or relationships that may be overlooked by human researchers. This practice is in line with research conducted by Turobov et al. (2024) which shows that ChatGPT can accelerate the qualitative analysis process, improve coding consistency, and organize data into in-depth thematic clusters (Lee et al., 2024; Perkins & Roe, 2024). Researchers continue to review the coding results produced by ChatGPT to ensure accuracy, validity, and relevance to the research context. This approach is considered effective in balancing analytical efficiency with academic rigor, as well as maintaining the integrity of the thematic process in phenomenology-based qualitative studies. After the analysis, the researcher prepared a report that

described the data in detail. Next, the researcher reduced to the most relevant things. Therefore, researchers are required to be able to recognize information that is directly related to the focus of their research.

2. Data Display

After reducing the data, the next step is to display the data. The data will be displayed using narrative text. The data will be arranged, categorized and connected to supporting theories and other related research. Thus, readers will easily read and understand the data presented.

3. Conclusion Drawing/Verification

In the final stage of qualitative data analysis, researchers carry out the process of drawing and verifying conclusions. In accordance with the views of Miles and Huberman, this stage allows researchers to find new things that have not been previously identified, so that they can deepen their understanding of the phenomena being studied. The conclusions drawn are temporary and are based on data that has gone through a process of systematic reduction and presentation. Furthermore, researchers link these conclusions to the research topic to ensure their relevance. Findings at this stage can be in the form of a clearer explanation or meaning of an object or symptom that previously seemed unclear. Therefore, the final form of this conclusion must be able to answer the formulation of the problem that has been determined since the beginning of the research.

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1.10.5 Research Timeline

Table 1. 1 Research Timeline

| No. | Date | | Target of Steps |
|-----|---------------|--|---|
| | Month | Weeks | |
| 1. | November 2024 | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation and submission of thesis titles 2. Submission of proposal 3. Research permission |
| 2. | December 2024 | 2 nd week | 1. Literature review |
| | | 3 rd week | 2. Research Instrument preparation: |
| | | 4 th week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation - Interview |
| 3. | Mei 2025 | 1 st – 2 nd week | 1. Collecting data: |
| | | 3 rd – 4 th week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation - Interview |
| 4. | Mei 2025 | 1 st – 2 rd week | 2. Transcription & Analysis the data |
| | | 3 rd week | |
| 5. | Oktober 2025 | 3 rd week | 1. Drawing conclusion of the research |