

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM FAMILY AS A KEY TO FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS ADAPTATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract. The transition from school to university often poses significant challenges for freshmen, particularly in academic, social, and emotional aspects. This study aims to understand the role of family emotional support in helping freshmen adapt to the university environment. Using a qualitative approach, this research involved six first-year Psychology students from Nusa Cendana University as participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using purposive sampling techniques and analyzed using thematic methods. The findings reveal that family emotional support, such as open communication and moral encouragement, plays a significant role in helping students manage academic pressure, homesickness, and the challenges of adapting to a new environment. Family support provides a sense of security, boosts self-confidence, and helps students cope with the pressures that arise during this transitional period. This study highlights the importance of family involvement in supporting freshmen to navigate the challenges of university life. By providing consistent attention and support, families can help students build the emotional resilience needed to adapt successfully. These findings are expected to provide valuable insights for families, educators, and related stakeholders in creating an that supports student success.

Keywords: Family Emotional Support, Freshmen Adaptation, University Transition, Emotional Resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is an important developmental phase, during which individuals experience significant physical, emotional and social changes. This period is often characterized by challenges to adjust to new demands, such as changes in education levels. Hurlock (1980) states that adolescence is a transitional period full of conflict and uncertainty, given their need to achieve independence, find self-identity, and build more complex social relationships. These challenges often lead to stress and emotional discomfort, especially if adolescents do not get adequate support from their surrounding environment. In this context, emotional support from the family plays an important role in helping adolescents navigate the challenges in their lives.

The family has a role as the first environment that shapes individual character. According to Santrock (2014), emotional support from the family provides a sense of security and confidence in children, which allows them to better deal with the pressures and challenges of life. Furthermore, the attachment theory proposed by Bowlby (1969) emphasizes the importance of a secure relationship between parents and children. Bowlby stated that “attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space” (Bowlby, 1969). This emphasizes that emotional attachment with parents is the foundation for healthy social and emotional development. In this case, adolescents who have good relationships with their families tend to be more confident, emotionally stable, and able to make wise decisions when facing social pressures.

Entering the world of lectures is one of the challenging transitional phases for adolescents, especially new students. According to Jahja (2015), the adaptation process at a higher education level requires

not only academic skills, but also social and emotional skills. New students often face academic pressures that are heavier compared to school days, as well as demands to build new social relationships in the campus environment. In this situation, support from family becomes important to help new students manage stress and build the emotional resilience needed to adapt to the new environment (Santrock, 2014).

The results of a survey conducted through interviews with six new students support the important role of family support in this adaptation process. Some students revealed that open communication with their families was the main source of their mental strength. They feel more confident and able to overcome difficulties when they know that their family is always there to support them. For example, one respondent stated that moral encouragement from parents helped to reduce fear and loneliness at the beginning of university. This finding underscores the important role of family as a key pillar in building freshmen's emotional balance.

In this paper, we will discuss more deeply the role of family emotional support in helping new students adapt to the world of college. This research aims to provide useful insights for parents, educators, and related parties in creating a supportive environment for new students. By understanding the importance of family relationships, it is hoped that the results of this study can be the basis for designing effective mentoring strategies, both in the family and campus environment, to support the academic and emotional success of new students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach that aims to deeply understand the experiences, views, and perceptions of new first semester students majoring in psychology at Nusa Cendana University regarding their adaptation in the lecture environment. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore descriptive and in-depth data, in accordance with the research objectives to explore social phenomena holistically.

The data collection method was conducted through in-depth interviews. This technique allows researchers to obtain detailed information about respondents' experiences and views. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, using an interview guide containing flexible open-ended questions. This allowed respondents to describe their experiences freely, while the researcher could adjust the questions according to the dynamics of the interview. Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique, with the main criteria being 18-19 year old freshmen enrolled in the psychology department of Nusa Cendana University. The number of participants involved in this study was 6 people.

The criteria for selecting participants include students who have direct experience related to the adaptation process in the lecture environment, both in terms of academic and social. Data obtained through interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This analysis aims to identify key themes relevant to the focus of the research, such as challenges faced in adapting, social support received, and strategies used to overcome obstacles. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the adaptation experience of new students in the context of lectures and social interactions in the university environment.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

This study shows that the role of parents in the adaptation of new students in the world of lectures has a significant impact. From the results of the interview all respondents seem to have good emotional support from their parents, some of them who migrate also maintain good communication with their parents. The role of family is very important for someone who is in the process of

maturing, including children. This statement is in line with Kuntjoro, Z., S (2008) that sources of social support can come from family members, close friends, or teachers.

The challenges of new students when entering lectures are different, respondents 1 and 2 have other goals that have not been achieved and finally decided to enter the Undana Psychology study program, respondent 3 has difficulty adapting to a new environment, and other respondents experience home sickness because they migrate, from the respondents' answers it seems that the difficulties they experience are enough to make them depressed but from all respondents they have good support from their parents this makes them feel more comfortable and calm.

Family emotional support has been shown to play a key role in the adaptation of new students to the world of university. Communication, attention, and continuous support are determining factors for students' success in facing the challenges of a new environment. Based on data from the six respondents:

1.1 The Importance of Regular Communication

All respondents emphasized that regular communication with family, both in person and virtually, helped them face the challenges of the first year. This is in line with Cutrona and Russell's (1987) theory of emotional support reducing anxiety and improving adaptation.

1.2 Balance of Support

Respondents 2, 4, and 5 indicated that excessive emotional support can limit students' exploration abilities in a new environment. This suggests that support should be provided in a balanced manner, not too controlling.

1.3 Limitations of Long-Distance Support

Respondent 3 revealed that while family emotional support is present, geographical distance and cultural differences can reduce its effectiveness. This indicates the importance of additional support from friends or mentors in the university environment.

1.4 Academic and Social Adaptation

Family emotional support helps students manage academic (Respondents 1 and 3) and social pressures (Respondents 2 and 5). These results are in line with previous research which states that family emotional support can improve students' psychological well-being (Wintre & Yaffe, 2000).

Based on the results and discussion of the research, it can be concluded that emotional support from family, especially parents, plays a very important role in the adaptation process of new students in the world of lectures. This emotional support helps students in overcoming academic challenges, adapting socially, and maintaining their psychological well-being during the stressful transition period. Therefore, it is highly recommended for parents to continue providing consistent attention and emotional support to their children, so that they can better navigate college life successfully.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that emotional support from family, especially parents, has a significant influence in helping new students adapt to college life. Regular communication, attention, and encouragement from family proved to be a major factor in helping students face academic, social, and emotional challenges during their first year at college.

From interviews with respondents, it was found that all respondents received good emotional support from their parents. Although some respondents migrated and faced challenges such as difficulty adapting, unattainable goals, or homesickness, they still felt comfortable and calm because of the good communication relationship with their parents. This finding is in line with the theory of Cutrona and Russell (1987) which states that emotional support can reduce anxiety and improve adaptability. However, this study also highlights the importance of balance in providing support.

Too much support can hinder a student's ability to explore in a new environment, as experienced by one respondent. In addition, for students who migrate, geographical distance and cultural differences can be a challenge in maintaining the effectiveness of emotional support.

In conclusion, family emotional support plays a key role in the successful adaptation of new students in the world of college. This support helps students cope with academic pressure, adapt socially, and maintain their psychological well-being. Therefore, it is important for families to provide consistent yet balanced support, so that students can better navigate this transition successfully.

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