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## **Academic Resilience among Undergraduate Students: The Analysis of Psycho-Social and Religious Aspects**

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**Abstract:** The increasing phenomena of mental health problems experienced by students need more attention not only by the parents but also by educational institutions and the government. Thus, we need a strategy to strengthen academic resilience, especially for students who are completing their thesis. In line with that, the aim of this study is to investigate the determinants of academic resilience. The independent variables proposed in this research are academic self-efficacy, social support and religiosity. This study applied a quantitative method with regression analysis using a questionnaire. One hundred twenty-eight completed responses were obtained from a state university in Malang, Indonesia. The research findings showed that only academic self-efficacy and social support have positive and significant effects on academic resilience. Although this study cannot confirm that religiosity has an impact on academic resilience, this research has attempted to fill the gap in previous research by elaborating on the determinants of academic resilience from psycho-social factors and religiosity.

**Keywords:** *academic resilience; academic self-efficacy; social support; religiosity*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this era of global development and technology, all aspects of life are required to be able to catch up with this transformation. This phenomenon also occurs among students who are required to meet increasing academic expectations. However, in some cases, it could pose negative results that hinder learning success, such as academic stress. Academic stress cannot be underestimated, considering that data shows that academic stress can lead to suicide. For example, the Indian National Crime Records Bureau shows that India has been reported as the country with the highest number of suicides in the world, predicting that a student committed suicide every 42 minutes in 2020 (Iswara, 2023). In Indonesia, suicide among students is driven by academic stress, which also occurs not only among undergraduate students but also among those who are still in elementary school (Siregar, 2021; Wawan, 2020). Several factors could contribute to or trigger academic stress, such as many tasks and assignments, study habits, high expectations, etc. (Bhwana, 2023; Iswara, 2023).

Focusing on undergraduate student academic problems, thesis completion has become an important issue in Indonesia today as data shows that in several years, this

academic problem could contribute to student suicide (Ariadi, 2023; Poskota, 2023; Wawan, 2020). However, according to Indriati, the Head of the Tarakan Health Service, data related to suicide due to thesis completion cannot be generalized as the only factor for student suicide. She said it depends on how students can handle the pressure and manage the stress (Balang, 2023).

The ability and capacity to cope with difficulties in academic situations is known as academic resilience. It is not a personal characteristic that is embedded in people's mental state, rather than reflected as an active process against threatening conditions (Cassidy, 2016; Connor, K. M., & Davidson, 2003; Rutter, Freedenthal, & Osman, 2008). A study by Javanmard (2013) showed that religious belief has a positive impact on academic resilience among university students in Iran. The finding is congruent with research in the country with a majority Muslim, such as Indonesia (Jawandi, 2023; Wahyuningrum & Setiyani, 2022) and also non-Muslim majority such as India (Annalakshmi & Abeer, 2013). As previously stated, academic resilience is a process of adapting and recovering from unpleasant experiences, and the process could be supported by people surrounding them. Thus, other researchers are also interested in exploring the effect of social influence on resilience, and the research findings also supported the hypothesis (Ahmed, Umrani, Qureshi, & Samad, 2018; Ashraf, Zareen, & Yildirim, 2023; Hendriani, 2017; Jowkar, Kohoulat, & Zakeri, 2011).

Based on phenomena in Indonesia and previous studies, the objective of this study is to investigate the effects of academic self-efficacy, social support and religiosity on academic resilience among students working on their undergraduate thesis. Florentina et al. (2021) and Fredanni and Nuryanti (2023) have conducted a study on this topic; however, they only consider social support and hardiness. Then, it is expected that the current study could shed light on the importance of academic self-efficacy and religiosity in shaping students' resilience, especially in Indonesia.

## METHODS

The current study applied a quantitative research design using a survey questionnaire. Likert scale with five-point is used to measure how respondents perceive the variables in the research model, ranging from strongly disagree/never to strongly agree/very often for the answer options. The questionnaire in this study was adopted from the previous studies and adapted to fit the context of the study. Based on Table 1, it can be seen that four variables are incorporated in this study. i.e., academic resilience, academic self-efficacy, social support and religiosity. For the religiosity variable, this study eliminates only three dimensions from Huber and Huber (2012), public practice, private practice and experience dimensions and eliminates intellect and ideology. It is based on the idea that religious practice could impact resilience (Annalakshmi & Abeer, 2013; Javanmard, 2013). Due to the difficulty in obtaining the precise number of students working on their thesis, this study used an online respondent-driven sampling (RDS) (Wejnert & Heckathorn, 2008). As the questionnaire was returned, the data would be analysed with multiple regression by using SPSS software.

**Table 1. Indicators adaptation from previous studies**

<b>Variable name</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Source</b>
Academic resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I believe I'm mentally tough when it comes to thesis completion.</li> <li>2. I don't let study stress get on top of me.</li> <li>3. I'm good at bouncing back from poor feedback from my supervisor.</li> <li>4. I think I'm good at dealing with pressures in completing the thesis.</li> <li>5. I don't let a bad comment from the supervisor affect my confidence.</li> <li>6. I'm good at dealing with setbacks in thesis completion.</li> </ol>	Martin and Marsh, 2006
Academic self-efficacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I'm certain I can master the skills taught in my campus.</li> <li>2. I can do even the hardest assignment if I try.</li> <li>3. If I have enough time, I can do a good job on all my assignment.</li> <li>4. I can do almost all the assignment if I don't give up.</li> <li>5. Even if the assignment is hard, I can learn it.</li> <li>6. I'm certain I can figure out how to do the most difficult assignment.</li> </ol>	Roeser, Midgley and Urdan, 1996
Social support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I experience a lot of understanding and security from others.</li> <li>2. I know a very close person whose help I can always count on.</li> <li>3. If necessary, I can easily borrow something I might need from neighbours or friends.</li> <li>4. I know several people with whom I like to do things.</li> <li>5. When I am sick, I can without hesitation ask friends and family to take care of important matters for me.</li> <li>6. If I am down, I know to whom I can go without hesitation.</li> </ol>	Kliem et al., 2015
Religiosity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How important is to take part in religious services?</li> <li>2. How important is it for you to be connected to a religious community?</li> <li>3. How often do you pray?</li> <li>4. How important is personal prayer for you?</li> <li>5. How often do you pray spontaneously when inspired by daily situations?</li> <li>6. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?</li> <li>7. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine wants to communicate or to reveal something to you?</li> <li>8. How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine is present?</li> </ol>	Huber and Huber, 2012

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

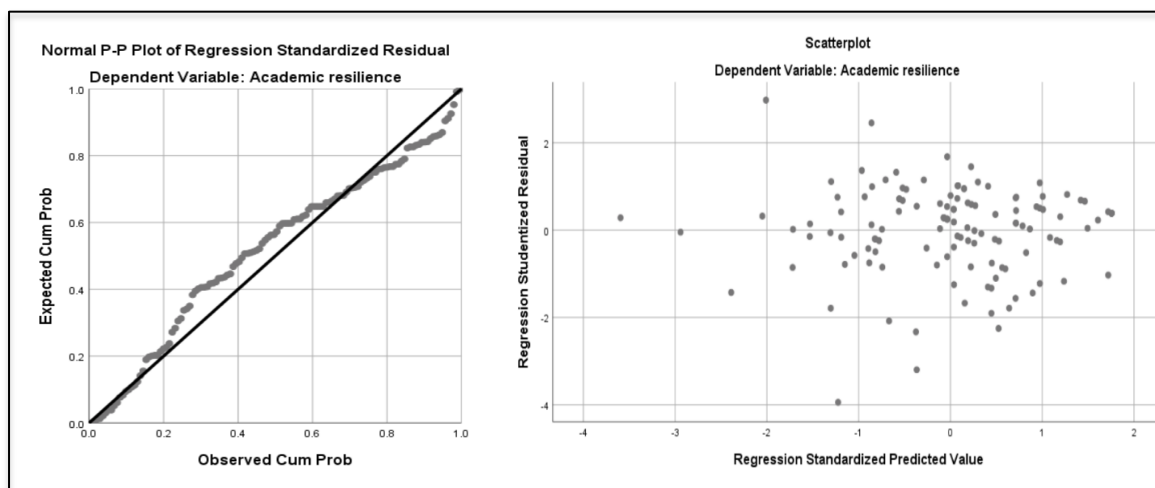
### *Results*

Data collection was taken in October 2023 at one of the state universities in Malang, Indonesia, and the total number of completed responses was 128. Prior to being analysed by inferential statistics to answer the aim of the study, Table 2 presents the respondent information in this study. It can be seen in the table that the majority of respondents were female, about 68%. Most of the respondents were in the seventh semester of the study, and they had good academic performance with GPA above 3.5 (for almost 80%).

**Table 2. Respondents' profile**

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	40	31.25
Female	88	68.75
<b>Semester:</b>		
7 <sup>th</sup>	107	83.59
8 <sup>th</sup>	4	3.13
9 <sup>th</sup>	17	13.28
<b>GPA:</b>		
Between 2.5 – 2.99	2	1.56
Between 3.00 – 3.49	24	18.75
Above 3.50	102	79.69
<b>Domicile:</b>		
Rent/boarding house	96	75
Own house	32	25

The questionnaire data used in this research have been tested for validity and reliability. The SPSS output results show that all items used are valid and reliable (with a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.8). The next step is to test classical assumptions, especially normality, linearity, and multicollinearity. Based on the results of the Normal P-Plot and scatter plot (see Figure 1), it can be seen that the data is normally distributed and linear.

**Figure 1. Normality and linearity test**

Since data in this study are linear and normally distributed, regression analysis can be applied (see Table 3). However, as there were three independent variables in this study, a multicollinearity test (VIF – Variance Inflation Factor) also has been conducted. Based on regression analysis, the multicollinearity issue was not present with a VIF score under 10. Next, it was found that academic self-efficacy and social support were positive and significant determinants for academic resilience, with regression coefficients 0.579

and 0.23 subsequently. An interesting finding is religiosity did not significantly impact academic resilience. However, the significance of the F statistic shows that all independent variables jointly had a significant impact on academic resilience. Lastly, the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of 0.442 indicates that the research model designed in this study could explain the variation in academic resilience for 44.2%.

**Table 3. Regression analysis**

Relationship	Regression coefficient ( $\beta$ )	T statistics	P-values	VIF
Academic self-efficacy - Academic resilience	0.579	5.506	0.000	1.600
Social support - Academic resilience	0.230	3.014	0.003	1.305
Religiosity - Academic resilience	0.113	1.233	0.220	1.347
F = 32.79 (sig. 0.000)				
$R^2 = 0.442$				

### *Discussion*

The present study attempted to explore the relationships of academic resilience with academic self-efficacy, social support, and religiosity. Based on regression analysis, two significant relationships were found, that is, academic self-efficacy – academic resilience and social support – academic resilience. Self-efficacy, as a psychological factor, is defined as a person's belief in their ability to organize and take action to solve a particular problem or task (Bandura, 1997:3). stated that there was a positive correlation between high school student resilience and academic self-efficacy. In addition, a study conducted by Keye and Pidgeon (2013) also said that academic mindfulness and self-efficacy greatly influenced resilience.

Further, it was found that social support had a positive and significant influence on academic resilience. This indicates that students with adequate social support tend to be stronger and able to *bounce back* after facing academic challenges. This differs from students who do not have social support from their environment or those closest to them (Erwanto, Istiqomah, & Firdiyanti, 2022). Basically, social support is a factor that can play an important role in the academic resilience of students themselves (Fredanni & Nuryanti, 2023). Also, another research, shows that there is a significant positive relationship between social support and academic resilience in final-year students. The more social support students receive, the stronger their academic resilience, allowing them to overcome academic challenges even in difficult situations (Sari & Indrawati, 2016). Studies by Narayanan and Onn (2016) and Musabiq et al. (2018) also confirmed that friends and family are sources of support that have a significant positive effect on academic resilience, and families/parents are the most important ones. Looking at Indonesia, which is also known as a collectivist society, also indicates that other values or suggestions could have impact on people academic life. For example, study by Anas Pratama & Arief (2019) showed that peers had a significant impact on students' learning outcome.

In this study, religiosity does not have a significant effect on student academic resilience, which did not support several previous studies (Annalakshmi & Abeer, 2013; Javanmard, 2013; Jawandi, 2023; Wahyuningrum & Setiyani, 2022). However, in the current study, if we look at the F-stat in Table 3, it is found that academic resilience was significantly influenced jointly by academic self-efficacy, social support and religiosity.

Moreover, related to student life in general, study by Susilawati (2018) also found that religiosity had impact on achievement motivation. Then, we cannot neglect the impact of religiosity in helping students recover from any setback. Self-efficacy is intrinsic individual support, whereas social support is motivation from people surrounding it. However, in the Islamic view, people should always have a strong belief that God will help at any time, and we are prohibited from being arrogant with our capacity. It can be learned from the story of Fir'aun, who rejected the preaching of the Prophet Musa. Fir'aun felt confident in his greatness, coupled with the tremendous social support from his followers, so he felt no need to follow and accept the religious teachings of the Prophet Musa. As a lesson, this story was finally taken up in the Al-Quran, namely in Surah Yunus verse 92:

فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلَقَكَ آيَةً وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ  
عَنِ آيَاتِنَا لَغَفُلُونَ

“So today, We save your body so that you can be a lesson for those who come after you, and indeed, most of humanity is heedless of Our signs.”

### CONCLUSION

This study attempted to investigate the determinants for academic resilience among university students currently working on their thesis by considering psychological aspects, social engagement, and religiosity. Two of three relationships in the model designed significantly affect academic resilience, i.e., academic self-efficacy and social support. The insignificance of religiosity could be due to religiosity's need to be a moderator –not an independent variable– that can strengthen the relationship between academic self-efficacy and social support to academic resilience. Thus, further study should consider designing a research model that incorporates moderating and mediating relationships among variables.

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