



## Academic Burnout among University Students in East Java, Indonesia

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper aims to describe the level of academic burnout in university students. The method used in this research is a descriptive analytical method with a survey technique. It involved 2392 students of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, with online data collection, on the university information system <https://survey.uinsa.ac.id/>, using the Indonesian version of the School Burnout Inventory. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics in tables and diagrams. The results showed that students who experienced academic burnout in the high category amounted to 13%, moderate 32%, and low 55%. While the results of research related to the 3 dimensions of academic burnout show that in dimension 1) Emotional Exhaustion results in a high category of 17%, moderate 36%, and low 48%, in dimension 2) Cynism shows results in the high category of 9%, moderate 25%, and low 66%, and finally in dimension 3) Personal Inadequacy shows a high category of 8%, medium 29%, and low 63%. Thus, it is important for educational institutions, which in this case are universities, to develop more effective intervention programs in dealing with academic burnout among university students, including the provision of counseling services for students.*

**KEYWORDS:** Academic Burnout, Emotional Exhaustion, University Students.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In general, burnout is a work-related mental health disorder that consists of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is a condition in which one's emotional resources are depleted. Depersonalization refers to a negative, cynical, and detached approach to those in one's care, and decreased personal accomplishment refers to feelings of low self-efficacy and negative feelings toward oneself (Awa et al., 2010).

Meanwhile, academic burnout is a phenomenon that has received increasing attention among university students in various countries. Academic burnout has become a significant focus of research in the context of university students around the world. This phenomenon refers to a state of chronic stress caused by excessive academic pressure, unrealistic expectations, and lack of social support in the academic environment (Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Its damaging impact is not only limited to students' mental well-being but can also affect their academic performance as well as retention rates in higher education (Regehr et al., 2013). As academic pressures and competition increase in higher education, a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to academic burnout and effective intervention strategies is becoming increasingly important.

Nine million Indonesians, or about 3.7 percent of the total population, experience depression, there are 3.4 suicides per 100,000 people in Indonesia, reported the World Population Review. Sixteen million individuals (or about 6 percent) aged 15 years and older have shown symptoms of anxiety or depression, while about 400,000 people (or about 1.72 percent) are living with more serious mental disorders such as psychosis. About 19 percent of Indonesian youth have considered ending their lives, and 45 percent of them admit to self-harming (Mental Health in Asia: The Numbers, 2019). Examining this empirical data, shows that the condition of burnout or psychological exhaustion experienced by individuals allows for mental illness, which results in a decrease in the quality of the individual's healthy life.

The condition of student academic burnout empirically in 2023 based on data from the Indonesian National Police in the period January to July 2023 recorded 663 suicides, or the equivalent of three cases every day. Compared to the same period in 2022, there was an increase of 36.4



percent in the number of suicides. Central Java and East Java provinces are the regions with the highest number of cases. Globally, Indonesia is recognized as one of the countries with a relatively low suicide rate of 2.6 per 100,000 population. This data ranks Indonesia 169th out of 182 countries monitored. Nonetheless, the low rate of suicide in Indonesia does not diminish the importance of recognizing and taking seriously the phenomenon of suicide, especially among university students (Susetyo, 2023).

The foregoing suggests that academic burnout can negatively impact the mental and physical well-being of individuals including university students, as well as their academic performance. Factors that can lead to academic burnout include pressure to achieve high academic standards, difficulty in balancing time between academic tasks and other activities, conflict between work and personal life, and lack of social support (Permatasari et al., 2021). Risk factors that contribute to academic burnout include heavy academic load, lack of social support, and imbalance between students' academic life and personal life (Aristovnik et al., 2020). In addition, aspects of the institutional environment such as lack of access to resources and support services can also exacerbate academic burnout (Zhang et al., 2007). Therefore, research that focuses on identifying and understanding these risk factors is crucial in efforts to prevent and treat academic burnout among university students.

Symptoms of academic burnout can vary from individual to individual but often include chronic fatigue, a cynical attitude towards academic tasks, and decreased motivation in learning (Awa et al., 2010). These symptoms not only impact students' academic performance but can also lead to decreased satisfaction with education and a decrease in overall quality of life (Salanova et al., 2010). With a better understanding of these symptoms, researchers and educational practitioners can develop more appropriate and effective intervention strategies to help students overcome academic burnout.

The impact of academic burnout on students can also be felt through their mental state and daily activities. This means that students experience changes in themselves which they then have to manage. Mentally, students also feel changes such as becoming more prone to fear, more emotional, jealous of other students, and so on (Sani et al., n.d.). Specific factors such as high population mobility, a fast-paced lifestyle, and a

high level of competition in the job market after graduation, further complicate the situation for students.

Surabaya, a major city in Indonesia, exhibits a complex reality. Surabaya, as the center of education and economic activity in East Java, attracts students from various regions to pursue higher education at the city's universities. However, the competitive academic environment and the pressure to achieve academic success often trigger burnout among students. In addition, the economic, social, and cultural challenges faced by students amidst the dynamics of big city life can also contribute to high-stress levels. The existence of an unhealthy lifestyle, economic pressures, and cultural challenges in a big city environment such as Surabaya can be additional risk factors that affect the level of burnout among students.

Thus, research on academic burnout among university students in Surabaya has important relevance in the context of student well-being and the development of effective intervention strategies to address this issue. Through an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence academic burnout in a big city environment such as Surabaya, efforts can be made to create a more supportive academic environment and align students' needs with the dynamics of life in a metropolitan city.

## II. METHOD

The method used in this research is a descriptive-analytical method with a survey technique. As explained by Nazir (2005), the descriptive analytical method is an approach to examine the status of a human group, object, condition, system, or event in the present. The purpose of this descriptive research is to compile a systematic, factual, and accurate description, description, or painting of the facts, properties, and relationships between the phenomena investigated (Nazir, 2005).

The survey involved students of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya. Data was collected through filling out an online questionnaire, on the university information system <https://survey.uinsa.ac.id/>, which was then filled in by 2392 students. Completion of the questionnaire by students was carried out in the period January-February 2024.

The instrument or questionnaire used was the Indonesian version of the School Burnout



Inventory, adapted by Rahman, D.H (2020), with a sample of 542 undergraduate students. The Indonesian version of the School Burnout Inventory has a validation coefficient with KMO-MSA of 0.868 and reliability with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.831. The School Burnout Inventory was originally developed by Salmela-Aro & Näätänen (2005) to measure the academic burnout of adolescent students. The Indonesian version of the School Burnout Inventory consists of 9 statement items, which were developed from three dimensions, namely: (1) Emotional Exhaustion, (2) Cynicism, and (3) Personal Inadequacy. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale (1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, and 5=always) (Rahman, 2020).

Data analysis was carried out with descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the condition of student academic burnout from the questionnaire data filled out. The data analysis used is descriptive because it describes the data that has been collected, namely data on the tendency of academic burnout in UIN Sunan Ampel students.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that among 2392 students who experienced academic burnout in the high category of 13%, moderate 32%, and low 55%, shown in Figure 1. The results showed that a small proportion of students felt a fairly severe level of academic burnout, which in this case was vulnerable to impact on physical and mental health, which ultimately affected academic achievement.

This reflects that there is a small proportion of students who experience enormous academic pressure, feel the demands of heavy assignments, as well as the lack of adequate social support. Most students are in the low category, indicating that the majority of them are still able to manage their academic load well. Meanwhile, the moderate category shows that although students experience significant academic fatigue, it is still within the limits that can be overcome with the ability of appropriate coping strategies. Thus, these results illustrate that although some students experience severe academic burnout, most of them are still in relatively good condition and can cope with academic pressure quite effectively.

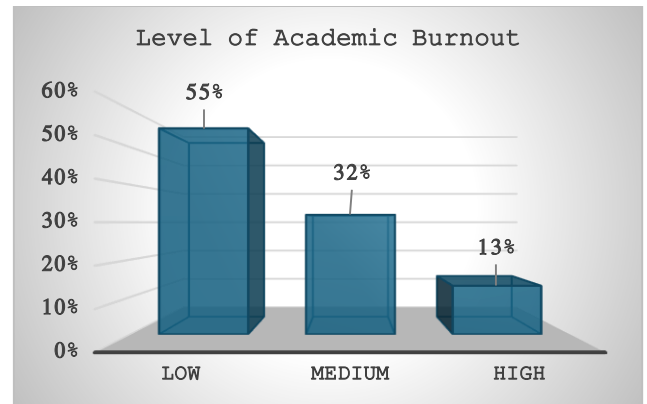


Figure 1: Level of Academic Burnout

As for the level of student academic burnout that shows a picture related to gender, it shows that there are differences in the level of academic burnout of male and female students at low levels, namely 37% in men and 63% in women, as well as at moderate levels, namely 36% in men and 64% in women. While the level of academic burnout of male and female students at low levels is the same at 50% each.

The results also showed a difference in the level of academic burnout between male and female students at low and moderate levels. This suggests that female students tend to be more prone to experiencing academic burnout compared to male students at both levels. This difference is influenced by various factors, including differences in ways of coping with stress, the burden of additional responsibilities, and perceptions of academic demands that differ between men and women.

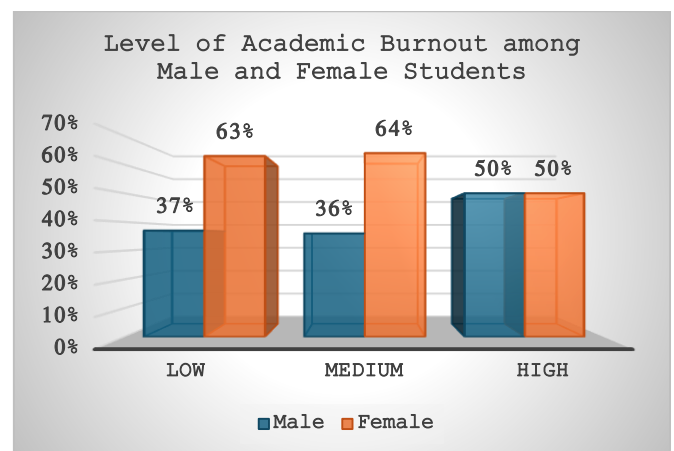


Figure 2: Level of Academic Burnout among Male and Female Students



However, at high levels, the levels of academic burnout among male and female students were similar, indicating that both male and female students were equally affected. This similarity may suggest that at extreme levels of burnout, the factors affecting academic burnout are more general and less influenced by gender. These findings are important to consider in designing more effective interventions and support, taking into account the specific needs of each gender at different levels of academic burnout.

Similarly, the results of research related to the 3 dimensions of student academic burnout show that in dimension 1. Emotional Exhaustion shows results in the high category of 17%, moderate 36%, and low 48%, in dimension 2. Cynicism shows results in the high category of 9%, moderate 25%, and low 66%, and finally in dimension 3. Personal Inadequacy shows results in the high category of 8%, moderate 29%, and low 63%, as shown in Figure 3.

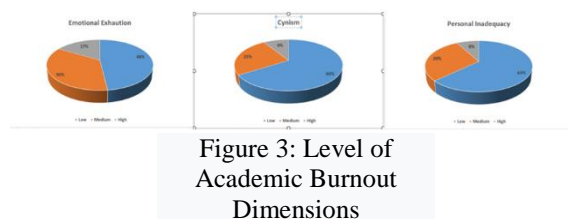


Figure 3: Level of Academic Burnout Dimensions

The results of research related to the three dimensions of student academic burnout show interesting variations in each dimension. The first dimension indicates that almost half of the students are still able to manage their emotions well despite academic pressure, although there are still 17% of students who experience high emotional exhaustion, so it remains a concern because it can affect overall motivation and academic performance.

In this case, there are still students who feel overwhelmed by college assignments. In the second dimension, cynicism, the results show that the majority are in the low category. The high percentage in the low category indicates that most students still have a positive view of their studies, especially they still show a positive response to the tasks given by the lecturer. Meanwhile, in the third dimension, personal inadequacy, the majority is also in the low category. This indicates that most students feel quite confident in their abilities to face academic demands, although there are a small number of them who have feelings of inadequacy.

Thus, research on academic burnout among university students in Surabaya has important relevance in the context of student well-being and the development of effective intervention strategies to address this issue. Through an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence academic burnout in a big city environment such as Surabaya, efforts can be made to create a more supportive academic environment and align students' needs with the dynamics of life in a metropolitan city.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Overall, the results of this study provide an in-depth picture of the level of academic burnout among university students. Of the total 2392 students studied, it was found that the majority were in the low category, which amounted to 55%, while 32% were in the medium category, and 13% experienced burnout in the high category. This shows that although most students are still able to manage academic stress well, there are a significant number of students who need more attention in terms of support and intervention to overcome the academic burnout they experience.

Differences in the level of academic burnout are also seen based on gender. Female students tend to be more prone to experiencing academic burnout in the low and moderate categories compared to male students. These findings suggest the importance of approaches tailored to the specific needs of each gender in an effort to address and prevent academic burnout.

Meanwhile, in terms of the three dimensions of academic burnout, namely Emotional Exhaustion, Cynicism, and Personal Inadequacy, the results revealed significant variations in each dimension. In the Emotional Exhaustion dimension, 17% of students were in the high category, while in Cynicism, only 9% were in the high category, and Personal Inadequacy, 8% were in the high category. Most students are in the low category in all three dimensions, which shows that the majority are still able to maintain their emotional well-being and self-confidence, although the Emotional Exhaustion dimension still needs attention. The findings underscore the importance of strategies or interventions that focus on emotion management, self-management, reinforcement of a positive outlook on studies, and enhancement of self-confidence among university students to reduce the risk of academic burnout.

Given that students who study in a big city like Surabaya certainly need an adaptation process in facing economic, social, and cultural challenges



amid the dynamics of big city life. The lifestyle that students must face contributes to high levels of stress, which is an additional risk factor that affects the level of burnout among students. In this regard, holistic and evidence-based interventions are increasingly necessary (Dyrbye, Shanafelt, Sinsky, Cipriano, Bhatt, Ommaya, West, 2017). Intervention strategies that include developing stress management skills, increasing social support, and promoting healthy lifestyles are effective in reducing levels of academic burnout and improving student well-being (Leiter & Maslach, 2016).

Therefore, it is important for educational institutions, in this case universities, to develop intervention programs that are more effective in dealing with academic burnout among university students. In this case, the role of the institutional environment aspect, which is access to resources and support services, has contributed to the condition of academic burnout (Zhang et al., 2007). These intervention programs are carried out institutionally, one of which is the existence of counseling service institutions for students.

Through counseling services to students, students will be assisted in dealing with problems that arise and are felt during lectures. The programs that can be implemented in the counseling service unit include:

1. Organizing regular workshops and training on stress management techniques.
2. Forming peer support groups where students can share experiences and strategies to overcome stress.
3. A mentoring program involving senior students or alumni who can provide support and practical advice to junior students.

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