

***Tawakal* in dealing with academic stress in students**

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Abstract: Academic stress is a common phenomenon among students, one form of *coping strategy* carried out by students when facing various academic demands is religious *coping with tawakal*. *Tawakal* is an important spiritual concept in Islam, encompassing someone to have complete trust in God (*Allah*), including facing challenges and stress in life. This study aims to determine the effect of *tawakal* in the daily lives of students when facing academic stress. Through a quantitative approach with 25 active students, 12 women and 13 men. Primary data collected through questionnaire as an instrument. Data analysis using Pearson correlation with normal and linear data results. The results showed that significant correlation between *tawakal* and academic stress (p-value = 0.069).

Keywords:

Academic stress, *tawakal*, muslim students

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Students are generally in the stage of early adulthood with age range between 18 and 40 years. This stage is period of life of seeking stability and a reproductive period signed with problems and emotional tension (Hurlock, 2008). Students experience various demands that must be met in their lives, including academic demands. Al-Dubai et al. (2011) stated that one of the main factors influence stress in students is academic problem. As a result of these many demands, many students face serious mental health crisis. This was concluded by Henriques (2014) based on various recent research journals in the field of student mental health.

King (2010) stated that stress is an individual's response to *stressors*. Stressors can be come from environments or events that threaten the individual and burden their coping abilities. Atkinson et al. (2010) stated that stress in general terms is something that happens to individuals when faced with events that they feel as something that threatens the physical or psychological health of an individual. Many studies had focused on academic stress among students. Those studies found that some source of stress are having too many assignments, competition between students, failure, financial factors, poor relationships between students and lecturers, and family problems at home (Busari, 2014). The results of a survey conducted by *the Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors* found that the growth of number of students applied for counseling centers throughout America indicates increasing psychological problems among students reached 95%. The survey also found an increase in the number of students experiencing quite serious psychological problems between 2013 and 2014 in 70% of counseling centers on various campuses in America (Reetz et al., 2014).

One form of coping strategy carried out by students when facing various academic demands is religious coping (Al-Dubai et al., 2011). Religious coping is a process or mechanism carried out by individuals when facing situations or objects that are threatening, where individuals carry out coping that is closely derived from religious beliefs, practices, experiences, emotions or relationships (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 1998). Utami (2012) found that there were positive correlation between positive religious coping and subjective well-being in students, both in their campus life and their personal life. Research conducted by Bataineh (2013) also concluded that stress management skills derived from religious sources (religious values, prayer, and reading the Quran) were significantly related to academic stress in students. One form of coping that individuals can do from religious sources is *tawakal*.

Tawakal, as explained by Imam Al-Ghazali, is divided into knowledge, things (conditions or circumstances), and deeds. Knowledge is the main thing, which is not known except by some people, who have been consistently applying their knowledge so that they easily understand the essential meaning of *tawakal*. From the several definitions above, it can be concluded that *tawakal* is a condition of the heart that believes that all matters, both those that have happened and those that have not happened, both in the form of disasters and blessings, are all in the knowledge and decree of *Allah*.

Ulama (Islamic scholars) explain that *tawakal* consists of two dimensions, namely being pleased with what will happen and trying to achieve the best results (*iktisab*). More firmly stated by Abdullah bin Baz that *tawakal* is a combination of efforts to obtain the cause of success and surrender to *Allah* (Rusdi, 2016). The balance of *tawakal* is by aligning between surrender and effort. It is not permissible to surrender to *Allah* without any efforts. *Tawakal* consists of the aspect of being pleased with what *Allah* will give and trying to get the best results (*iktisab*) (Rusdi, 2016). Based on the explanation above, this study aims to determine the influence of *tawakal* in the daily lives of students when facing academic stress.

Academic stress is a condition which individuals experience pressure and demands that they are unable to manage and complete academic tasks properly (Khaira, 2023). Aspects of academic stress according to Sun et al. (2011) include: study pressure, workload, concerns about grades, expectations about grades, self-expectations, and hopelessness.

Study pressures include: differences in academic transition from high school to college, adjustment or adaptation of students to the form of learning, demands from families to get higher grades, a lot of lecture material that requires students to understand the whole thing, and impromptu quizzes and *closed book exams* by lecturers. The workload includes: joining organizations that cause procrastination, many assignments given by lecturers, assignments with close *deadlines so that students have difficulty managing their time*. Concerns about grades include: feeling pressured to excel more than parents, having the expectation of getting a high GPA every semester, and fear of being considered a burden by the environment when getting low grades. Self-expectations include: fear of failing to complete college, fear of not getting a definite job after graduating, differences between self-expectations and the grades obtained, feeling that parents will be disappointed when getting low grades. Hopelessness includes: lack of confidence in students to be able to complete assignments, feeling a lack of ability in doing assignments, feeling difficulty in learning courses with a *non-remedial system* so that they tend to give up.

According to Rumi, *tawakkul* involves wholeheartedly entrusting one's affairs to God after exerting sincere effort; this form of spiritual reliance promotes inner tranquility and resilience, even in the face of uncertainty (Nurhasan, 2019; Silmi Adawiyah, 2018). Rumi explains that *tawakal* can be defined as *Allah* Swt has control over everything and *Allah* Swt will give blessings and happiness to those who believe and also do good deeds. In this context, this study can help to understand how *tawakal* can help students to manage academic stress. Establishing unwavering trust in Allah—entrusting all matters to Him after sincere effort—cultivates inner peace and emotional stability, as supported by Islamic psychology (Rassoola & Luqman, 2022) and empirical research showing that *tawakkul* reduces academic stress, depression, and anxious attachment (Adil *et al.*, 2022; Fatimah & Hawadi, 2020; Marzband *et al.*, 2015).

From several aspects, there are also several indicators in it, including submitting all matters to *Allah* after making efforts and endeavors. This also includes trying one's best in all things, but also understanding that the end of all efforts is in *Allah's* hands. Having faith in the power of God, including fully understanding that God is almighty over all things, believing that everything that happens is God's will and relying on Him in all things. Feeling calm and peaceful in all conditions, including feeling calm and peaceful, both in difficult and happy circumstances. In addition, there is a belief that Allah will give the best for him, whether it is according to his wishes or not.

Alvin (2007) stated several internal factors that cause academic stress, namely the individual's mindset, whether they can control the situation they are facing or not. Human abilities have limitations, while belief in something that has limitations can cause inconsistencies and clashes with real conditions. Ultimately, these expectations become the trigger for distress in individuals. Different conditions will occur if individuals surrender to Allah. Surrender or an attitude of accepting whatever results are obtained from their efforts, prevents individuals from worrying about whether the results they will get later will be in accordance with their expectations or not. This is supported by the conclusion of Utami (2012) which shows that individuals can overcome the stress by re-describing the stressor through religion in a good and beneficial way. This effort is a form of religious coping that individuals can do when facing stressors. Thus, the involvement of hope accompanied by resignation in one's efforts can affect stress in individuals.

METHOD

This research method uses a quantitative approach with a questionnaire as an instrument of this study for primary data collection. The first step is to design a questionnaire that is in accordance with the research objectives and the variables to be studied. The questionnaire will consist of structured questions designed to collect information relevant to the research variables. After designing the questionnaire, the next stage is to test the

validity and reliability of the questionnaire through a trial. After the final questionnaire is prepared, the researcher will distribute it to respondents who are part of the population being studied. The collected data will then be analyzed using statistical techniques such as descriptive regression analysis, or other statistical methods in accordance with the research objectives.

RESULTS

Based on our research, we conducted a study with 25 subjects. There were 12 female subjects (48%) and 13 male subjects (52%). The subjects, both male and female, were Muslim, numbered 25 (100%), had the status of active university students, numbered 25 (100%), were over 18 years old, numbered 25 (100%), and answered the questionnaire properly and correctly.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistic

	Academic Stress	Tawakal	Relationship between Academic Stress and Tawakal
N	25	25	25
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	59.8	39.5	26.0
Median	59	40	26
Standard deviation	13.0	4.29	4.50
Minimum	41	31	12
Maximum	99	46	33

Table 2

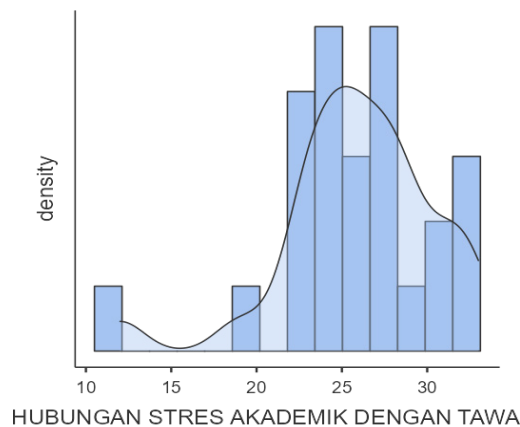
Description

Relationship between Academic Stress and Tawakal	
N	25
Variance	20.3
Minimum	12
Maximum	33
Skewness	-1.07
Std. error skewness	0.464
Kurtosis	2.70
Std. error kurtosis	0.902
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.926
Shapiro-Wilk p	0.069

The assumption test was carried out using descriptive statistics as a form of analyzing respondents' demographic data, making it easier to measure the level of *tawakal* and level of academic stress in students. Correlation analysis between *tawakal* and students' academic stress which is positively correlated and gets results that are "skewed to the right of the normal distribution".

Figure 1

Histogram and density plot of sample data



DISCUSSION

The results of the hypothesis regarding the influence of *tawakal* on academic stress are accepted. Former studies had found that individual's *tawakal* will influence the existence of academic stress. On the contrary, research on the correlation of expectations with academic stress is rejected. High expectations do not minimize the risk of academic stress in individuals. Stress is usually caused by a mismatch between the expected situation and the actual biological, psychological, or social system conditions. This study is supported by a thesis on the correlation between *tawakal* and academic stress in UIN Ar-Raniry students. Similar research on *tawakal* and academic stress in Students Taking Online Lectures (Refri et al., 2021).

Based on the two studies, the research is supporting and strengthening because in both studies it states that high expectations from others do not have a big impact on academics, in fact the biggest impact comes from oneself. The influence of mental health on oneself results in difficulty starting to do assignments, difficulty doing assignments correctly, difficulty understanding assignments, and a tendency to change eating patterns in oneself (see Eisenberg *et al.*, 2009). So, it can be concluded that the higher the *tawakal* a person has, the lower the academic stress he or she feels.

This study has shortcomings in the form of limitations in the quantitative approach in numbers and questionnaire questions and answers so that subjects can only choose to adjust the answers listed in the questionnaire. So that researchers cannot see other points of view that the subjects feel. The distribution of online questionnaires is considered limited by the number of subjects being limited so that the questionnaire is only filled in by the researcher's environment and does not get extensive research. Filling out too many questionnaires has a saturated impact on the subjects so that most subjects do not answer seriously and tend to answer the questionnaire carelessly. Subjects who fill out the questionnaire while experiencing academic stress also affect filling out the questionnaire because they answer impulsively and tend to be in a hurry.

Based on the results of the study and the support of other studies on this proposal, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive correlation related to *tawakal* with academic stress in students. So, the results given are the higher the *tawakal*, the lower the academic stress felt by students. The lower the *tawakal*, the higher the academic stress experienced. The effect of *tawakal* on stress can be said to be experienced by almost all subjects who filled out the questionnaire. Increasing trust itself can have a significant impact

on academic stress (Khosravi and Nikmanesh, 2014). There are many ways to increase trust, one of which is to always remember to continue to change yourself to be better, always bring positive thoughts to yourself, continue to get closer to God. Future researches need to consider: provide a large respondents.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that *tawakal*, or sincere trust and surrender to God, plays a significant role in reducing academic stress among students. When students possess a high level of *tawakal*, they are more likely to face academic challenges with a calm and resilient mindset. Their sense of surrender and faith helps them manage pressure more effectively, reducing anxiety and negative emotional responses to academic demands. On the other hand, the study finds that having high expectations—whether from oneself or others—does not significantly alleviate academic stress. Stress tends to arise when there is a mismatch between what is expected and what actually occurs in a person's internal or external environment. This suggests that academic stress is influenced more by how individuals manage their inner thoughts and beliefs rather than external pressures or ambitions.

Ultimately, the findings highlight the importance of inner strength and spiritual trust as protective factors in academic life. Students who cultivate a strong sense of *tawakal* tend to experience lower levels of stress, demonstrating that mental and spiritual well-being are deeply interconnected. Therefore, promoting spiritual awareness and personal growth may serve as an effective strategy in helping students cope with academic stress.

SUGGESTION

Based on the results of this study, there are a few important suggestions for both everyday use and future research. First, schools and universities should try to support students not just academically, but also spiritually and emotionally. Activities like workshops, counseling sessions, or group discussions that encourage *tawakal* (trust in God), positive thinking, and self-confidence can help reduce stress. Second, students themselves can practice increasing their *tawakal* by staying connected to their faith, reflecting on their efforts, and building a positive mindset when facing challenges. For future research, this study suggests that it is important to involve more participants from different backgrounds and large respondents to make the results more accurate and widely applicable. Researchers can also explore how *tawakal* works together with other personal strengths—like confidence, motivation, or support from friends and family—to help reduce stress.

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