

## The Influence of Emotional Regulation on Academic Resilience in Students Who Are Working on Their Thesis

Fauzi Budi Prasetyo<sup>1</sup>, Aulia Nur'Aini<sup>2</sup>, Anggia Sarah Febriani<sup>3</sup>

Faculty of Psychology, Master of Professional Psychology, Persada Indonesia University YAI

E-mail: fauzibdp@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, aulianurr@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>, anggiasfwork@gmail.com<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

*This study aims to determine the role of emotion regulation on academic resilience in 10th, 12th, and 14th semester students who are working on an undergraduate thesis. The research method used is quantitative, employing multiple regression analysis techniques to analyze the data. The instruments used in this study include the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) scale, developed by Gross and John (2003), to measure emotion regulation, and The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), developed by Cassidy (2016), to measure academic resilience. The results of the study reveal that there is a significant positive effect of cognitive reappraisal emotion regulation on academic resilience among students in their 10th, 12th, and 14th semesters who are working on their thesis, accounting for 27.1% of the variance in academic resilience. This finding suggests that students who engage in cognitive reappraisal, a strategy that involves reinterpreting a situation to change its emotional impact, are more likely to demonstrate resilience in the face of academic challenges. In contrast, the study found no significant effect of expressive suppression emotion regulation on academic resilience in the same group of students. Expressive suppression, which involves inhibiting the outward expression of emotions, does not appear to contribute to the ability of students to remain resilient while working on their thesis. These findings highlight the importance of cognitive emotion regulation strategies in fostering academic resilience among students, particularly during challenging academic tasks such as thesis completion.*

**Keywords** academic resilience, emotion regulation, college students, undergraduate thesis

### INTRODUCTION

Completing an undergraduate thesis is one of the most challenging and critical milestones in a student's academic journey. According to Agwil, Fransiska, & Hidayati (2020), undergraduate students are expected to graduate on time if they complete their studies within four years or less. However, students who extend beyond this timeframe, such as those in their 10th, 12th, and 14th semesters, are considered to have not graduated on time. This extended period can increase the academic and psychological pressure on students, particularly as they face the looming threat of not completing their studies within the prescribed period.

The consequences of not graduating on time are not merely academic; they can also have severe emotional and psychological impacts. A tragic example of this is the case reported by Kompas (2020) on June 11, 2020, where a final-year student with the initials BH, who was in his 14th semester, committed suicide. BH was reportedly depressed due to his inability to graduate, as his thesis was repeatedly rejected by his supervisor. This case underscores the extreme stress and despair that can result from prolonged academic challenges and failures, particularly in the thesis writing process.

In light of these observations, it is crucial to understand the factors that contribute to the ability of some students to persist and succeed under similar pressures while others may succumb to despair. To explore this, the researcher conducted an interview study with three



respondents: IN (22), J (24), and NS (24), all of whom were students in their 10th, 12th, or 14th semesters and were actively working on their thesis. The interviews revealed varied responses to the challenges faced. IN (22) and J (24) demonstrated positive responses, showing persistence and a strong desire to complete their thesis, while NS exhibited feelings of hopelessness and a lack of motivation to continue.

These differences in response highlight the importance of resilience and emotional regulation during the thesis writing process, particularly for students who are at risk of not graduating on time. Positive coping strategies, like those displayed by IN and J, are crucial for students in advanced semesters to manage the pressures and difficulties associated with thesis completion. Without such strategies, students may not only delay their graduation further but also face the risk of severe psychological distress, potentially leading to outcomes as dire as dropping out or even more tragic consequences, as seen in the case of BH.

Given the critical importance of emotional regulation and resilience in academic success, this study aims to examine the role of emotion regulation in academic resilience among students in their 10th, 12th, and 14th semesters who are working on their thesis. By understanding how different strategies of emotion regulation can influence academic resilience, educators and counselors can better support students in overcoming the challenges they face during this pivotal period in their academic careers. This research is particularly significant as it seeks to provide insights that could help prevent adverse outcomes, such as academic failure or psychological harm, thereby contributing to more effective support systems within higher education institutions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Martin and Marsh (2003) observed that while some students experience setbacks, stress, and even give up due to academic difficulties and pressure, others are able to face these challenges by proactively responding and persevering. They attributed this ability to a concept known as academic resilience. Academic resilience refers to the capacity of students to overcome adversity and continue to achieve academically despite encountering obstacles.

Building on this, Cassidy (2016) identified three dimensions of academic resilience: Reflecting and Adaptive Help-Seeking, Negative Affect, and Emotional Response. Negative Affect and Emotional Responses are particularly important as they involve the emotional reactions that students have when faced with stressful academic situations. According to Du, Huang, An, and Xu (2018), students who are unable to manage their negative emotions effectively during stressful events are more likely to develop a range of complex negative emotions such as depression, anxiety, and anger. These emotions can, in turn, adversely affect their academic performance.

Hafiz (2015) emphasizes that emotional regulation strategies are a crucial resource for enhancing learning, achievement, and overall quality in education. Effective emotional regulation helps students manage their emotions in a way that enables them to overcome difficulties and solve problems, which can, in turn, boost their perseverance, particularly in challenging tasks like thesis writing.

Gross (2002) defines emotional regulation as the process through which individuals influence the emotions they experience, as well as when and how they express these emotions. Gross and John (2003) further identified two key strategies in emotional regulation: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. Cognitive reappraisal involves reinterpreting a situation to lessen its emotional impact, while expressive suppression involves inhibiting the outward expression of emotions.

Research by Sekarini (2021) on final-year students demonstrated a significant relationship between emotional regulation and resilience, indicating that students who effectively regulate their emotions are more likely to exhibit resilience in the face of academic challenges. Similarly, Sukmaningpraja and Santhoso (2016) found that emotional regulation plays a role in resilience, accounting for 46.6% of the variance in their study. However, these findings contrast with the results of Pahlevi and Salve (2018), who found no significant relationship between emotional regulation and resilience in students who migrated and lived in boarding houses.

The existing body of research provides mixed results regarding the relationship between emotional regulation and resilience. While some studies support a strong link, others do not find a significant connection. Notably, there is a gap in the research concerning academic resilience and emotional regulation among students in advanced semesters (10th, 12th, and 14th) who are working on their thesis. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by examining the influence of emotional regulation on academic resilience in these specific student groups.

## **METHOD**

This research uses quantitative methods. Quantitative research is research that uses a lot of numbers, both from data collection, data interpretation, to the results of the data (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). The independent variable in this research is emotional regulation, while the dependent variable in this research is academic resilience.

The population and sample in this research are students in semesters 10, 12, & 14 who are working on their thesis. The technique used in sampling in this research used non-probability sampling with convenience techniques. According to Dornyei (2007), convenience techniques are selected based on certain practical criteria, such as time availability, ease of accessibility and respondent willingness while still paying attention to respondent characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives.

In this research, the data collection technique was carried out using a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a data collection technique that is carried out indirectly, meaning that the researcher does not conduct questions and answers directly with the respondent, but rather the respondent must fill in a list of questions that have been prepared systematically by the researcher (Kurniawan & Puspitaningtyas, 2016). The questionnaire used in this research is an academic resilience scale that has been adapted by Ismah Karima Jamil in 2021 based on the original ARS-30 scale compiled by Cassidy in 2016. Then the questionnaire used to measure emotional regulation is a scale that has been adapted by Hanan Fadilah in 2019



based on the original ERQ scale compiled by Gross & John in 2003. In this research, the data analysis technique used is regression analysis technique.

Research methods contain the type of research, research methods used, research approaches used (quantitative/qualitative), research variables, types of research data, research respondents (population and sample), data collection techniques, research instruments used, and data analysis techniques.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the regression analysis, it was found that the emotional regulation variable with the cognitive reappraisal strategy had a significant impact on academic resilience in 10th, 12th, and 14th semester students who were working on their thesis. This result is indicated by a p-value (sig. 0.000) that is less than  $\alpha$ , and a t-value (6.979) that is greater than the t-table value (1.960). This means that there is a significant influence of cognitive reappraisal on academic resilience. On the other hand, the emotional regulation variable with the expressive suppression strategy did not show a significant impact on academic resilience, as indicated by a p-value (sig. 0.562) that is greater than  $\alpha$ , and a t-value (0.581) that is less than the t-table value (1.960).

These findings provide empirical evidence that the cognitive reappraisal strategy plays an important role in helping students maintain their academic resilience. This strategy allows individuals to reinterpret challenging situations in a positive light, thus reducing negative emotional impacts and enhancing their ability to stay focused on academic tasks.

In contrast, the results indicate that the expressive suppression strategy, which involves suppressing emotional expression, does not significantly contribute to academic resilience. This may be due to the fact that suppression does not change how one feels emotions but merely inhibits the outward expression of these emotions. Consequently, negative emotions remain and can disrupt focus and one's ability to cope with academic challenges.

### Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study reinforce the emotion regulation theory proposed by Gross (2001) and Gross & John (2003). According to Gross, emotion regulation is a process that involves how individuals influence the emotions they experience, when and how these emotions are felt and expressed. This study demonstrates that the cognitive reappraisal strategy is more effective in supporting academic resilience compared to the expressive suppression strategy.

Moreover, these findings align with the views of Andriani & Listiyandini (2017), who stated that an individual's cognitive abilities can influence their resilience, with more cognitively capable individuals being better at finding the best solutions to problems. Pahlevi & Salve (2018) also support this finding, noting that when someone can control their feelings with cognitive knowledge, they are more likely to endure and find a way out of the problems they face.

### Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, these findings have important implications for educators and higher education practitioners. Given the importance of emotion regulation in academic resilience, educators should consider integrating emotion regulation training into the curriculum, particularly related to challenging academic tasks like thesis writing. Such training could include cognitive reappraisal strategies, which can help students reinterpret stressful situations in more positive and constructive ways.

Additionally, psychological support and counseling services can focus on developing emotion regulation skills, especially for students who show signs of difficulty in managing academic stress. In counseling sessions, students can be taught cognitive reappraisal techniques, such as replacing negative thoughts with more positive or realistic interpretations.

### Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Sukmaningpraja & Santhoso (2016), who found that emotion regulation plays a significant role in students' resilience. They found that emotion regulation significantly contributes to students' ability to face and overcome academic challenges. Ridwan (2020) also found a relationship between emotion regulation and resilience, particularly in cadets, suggesting that emotion regulation is an important factor in resilience across various academic and non-academic contexts.

However, these findings differ from those of Pahlevi & Salve (2018), who found no significant relationship between emotion regulation and resilience in students who migrated and lived in boarding houses. These differing results may be due to variations in research context, sample characteristics, or differences in methodological approaches.

### Limitations of the Study

While this study provides important insights into the role of emotion regulation in academic resilience, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, this study only included students from the 10th, 12th, and 14th semesters at universities in Indonesia, which may result in less homogeneous data due to Indonesia's vast territory and variation in educational backgrounds. This heterogeneity may lead to bias and limit the generalizability of the findings.

Second, there is an imbalance in the demographic distribution of respondents across semesters, with the majority of respondents coming from the 10th semester (70.7%). This imbalance may affect the results and interpretation of the data, given the different levels of stress and academic workload across semesters.

Additionally, the use of non-probability sampling in data collection is a limitation, as it may reduce the representativeness of the sample and lead to difficulties in finding respondents that meet the research criteria.



## Recommendations for Future Research

For future research, it is recommended to broaden the scope by including students from various universities in Indonesia in a more balanced manner regarding demographics and semester distribution. The use of more representative sampling methods can also enhance the external validity of the study's findings.

Future studies could also explore other factors that may influence academic resilience, such as social support, intrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy. Understanding the interaction between emotion regulation and these factors could provide a more comprehensive picture of academic resilience.

Additionally, in-depth qualitative research could offer further insights into the subjective experiences of students in managing emotions and academic challenges, which could complement quantitative findings and provide more holistic recommendations for educational interventions.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted on 133 students in semesters 10, 12 & 14 who were working on their thesis, it was concluded that there was a positive influence of cognitive reappraisal emotional regulation on academic resilience. This shows that if there are changes in cognitive reappraisal emotional regulation, then these changes will result in academic resilience. Meanwhile, based on the results of this study, it shows that there is no influence of expressive suppression emotional regulation on academic resilience. The magnitude of the contribution or influence provided by the cognitive reappraisal emotional regulation variable on academic resilience is 27.1%, while the other 72.9% is influenced by other variables outside cognitive reappraisal emotional regulation.

This study demonstrates that emotion regulation, particularly through cognitive reappraisal strategies, has a significant impact on the academic resilience of students working on their thesis. Conversely, the expressive suppression strategy does not significantly contribute to academic resilience. These findings highlight the importance of developing emotion regulation skills among students, particularly in high-pressure academic contexts such as thesis writing. Despite some limitations, this study provides a solid foundation for developing more effective educational interventions to support academic resilience.

Thus, this study contributes significantly to the literature on emotion regulation and academic resilience and offers practical implications for higher education in supporting student academic success.

## REFERENCES

- Agwil, W., Fransiska, H., & Hidayati, N. (2020). Analisis ketepatan waktu lulus mahasiswa dengan menggunakan Bagging Cart. *FIBONACCI: Jurnal Pendidikan Matematika dan Matematika*, 6(2), 155-166.
- Andriani, A., & Listiyandini, R. A. (2017). Peran kecerdasan sosial terhadap resiliensi pada mahasiswa tingkat awal. *Psychopathic: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 4(1), 67-90.

- Bryant, M. L. (2015). Handbook on emotion regulation: Processes, cognitive effects and social consequences. *Psychology of Emotions, Motivations and Actions*.
- Cassidy, S. (2016). The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30): A new multidimensional construct measure. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 1787. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01787>
- Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies* (Ed 1). Oxford University Press.
- Du, J., Huang, J., An, Y., & Xu, W. (2018). The relationship between stress and negative emotion: The mediating role of rumination. *Clinical Research and Trials*, 4(1), 1-5.
- Garnefski, N., Kraaij, V., & Spinhoven, P. (2001). Negative life events, cognitive emotion regulation, and emotional problems.
- Gross, J. J. (2001). Emotion regulation in adulthood: Timing is everything. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 10(6), 214-219.
- Gross, J. J. (2002). Emotion regulation: Affective, cognitive, and social consequences. *Psychophysiology*, 39(3), 281-291.
- Gross, J. J., & John, O. P. (2003). Individual differences in two emotion regulation processes: Implications for affect, relationships, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(2), 348-362.
- Hafiz, N. H. A. H. (2015). Emotion regulation and academic performance among IIUM students: A preliminary study. *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*, 29(2), 81-92.
- Kompas. (2020, July 14). Mahasiswa gantung diri diduga depresi karena skripsi sering ditolak dosen, ini penjelasan universitas. Kompas. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/07/14/21230961/mahasiswanya-gantung-diri-diduga-depresi-karena-skripsi-sering-ditolak-dosen?page=all>
- Kurniawan, A. W., & Puspitaningtyas, Z. (2016). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif*. Yogyakarta: Pandiva Buku.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2003). *Academic resilience and the four Cs: Confidence, control, composure, and commitment*. Sydney: Self-Concept Enhancement and Learning Facilitation Research Centre.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2006). Academic resilience and its psychological and educational correlates: A construct validity approach. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(3), 267-282.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2008). Academic buoyancy: Towards an understanding of students' everyday academic resilience. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(1), 58-83.
- Pahlevi, G. R., & Salve, H. R. (2018). Regulasi emosi dan resiliensi pada mahasiswa merantau yang tinggal di tempat kos. *Jurnal Psikologi*, 11(2), 180-189.
- Ridwan, G. A. (2020). Pengaruh tingkat regulasi emosi dan tingkat resiliensi pada taruna tahun pertama. *NUSANTARA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*, 7(3), 565-572.
- Sekarini, L. (2021). Hubungan regulasi emosi dengan resiliensi pada mahasiswa tingkat akhir. *Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan MAKIA*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Siyoto, S., & Sodik, M. A. (2015). *Dasar metodologi penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Literasi Media Publishing.



- Suhartini, R. (2016). Ketelambatan penyelesaian studi mahasiswa Bidikmisi (Studi kasus: Mahasiswa Bidikmisi jurusan sosiologi 2010). Sarjana thesis, Universitas Negeri Jakarta.
- Sukmaningpraja, A., & Santhoso, F. H. (2016). Peran regulasi emosi terhadap resiliensi pada siswa sekolah berasrama berbasis semi militer. *Gadjah Mada Journal of Psychology*, 2(3), 184-191.
- Wulan, D. A., & Abdullah, S. M. (2015). Prokrastinasi akademik dalam penyelesaian skripsi. *Jurnal Sosio-Humaniora*, 5(1), 55-74