

Academic Stress and Problem-Focused Coping in Working Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how working students' issues with coping with academic stress are affected. 80 working students, ages 20 to 40, who had worked for at least six months, were the study's participants. Purposive sampling was the sampling strategy used in this investigation, and basic linear regression was the data analysis method. According to the findings, working students' academic stress was impacted by problem-focused coping at a significance level of 5% (sig.= 0.002, $p < 0.05$). So, it can be said that problem-focused coping affects academic stress and that the technique works better for students who study while working if they are confident in their ability to handle the circumstances they find themselves in.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Problem focused coping, working students

Introduction

Students who work while they study have important responsibilities both inside and outside of the classroom. According to Tumin and Faizuddin (2018), working students benefit from having more possibilities to learn new concepts, broaden their knowledge from experiences outside of the classroom, and have a feel for the working world. Students who study while working often have low academic performance, trouble managing their time between work and study, and problems meeting deadlines for both coursework and work obligations. This is due to the fact that students who study while working typically concentrate more on their work, which severely depletes their energy and impairs their ability to concentrate when studying. A common side effect of working while studying for exams is exhaustion, which can lead to stress and lower productivity at work and in the classroom (Hamadi, Wiyono, & Rahayu, 2018).

Students who study while working may encounter stresses related to their academic work. An excessive amount of academic stress might have a negative impact on an individual's ability to achieve their goals. According to Puspitadewi (2012), working students' stress can lead to issues including bad performance and accomplishments, missing work or school frequently, and improperly or late completion of assignments. Similar findings were made by Rockika (2014), who claimed that kids who study while working the next year experience lower academic achievement and lower levels of participation in school.

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress cannot be completely eliminated or avoided; instead, people must alter the way they view the world and how they deal with stress in order to prevent its worst effects. What sets people apart from one another is their range of stress levels, from mild to chronic. Academic stress is typically what working students experience when they are stressed. According to Gadzella (in Gadzella & Masten, 2005), academic stress is a result of an individual's perception of academic stresses and their physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive responses to these stressors.

Everybody responds differently to stress, especially academic stress. Emotion-focused and problem-focused coping are the most well-known techniques. One strategy for managing stress head-on is problem-focused coping, which involves

making multiple adjustments to a difficult circumstance. These issues center on problem solving, problem handling, and taking decisive action to alleviate stressful situations (Marin, Holtzman, & DeLongis, 2007; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The only problem-focused coping strategies covered in this research are problem-focused strategies because they are related to academic stressors that negatively affect working students. Prior studies on 60 students in Tabriz, Iran by Zarei, Hashemi, Sadipoor, et al. (2016) demonstrated that problem-focused coping significantly reduced academic stress. Comparable findings also demonstrate that the problem-focused coping strategy helps 38 class VIII students at SMPN 1 Galesong Utara Kab. Takalar effectively manage their stress related to learning during mathematics lessons (Idris & Pandang, 2018).

More research was done by researchers using more challenging issues and subjects with distinct features from the first study. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how problem-focused coping affects working students' academic stress. The research's hypothesis is that problem-focused coping helps working students deal with the stress of their studies.

Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach. This research involved 80 working student participants, responses were gathered online using a Google Form. The majority of participants in this study were aged 20-30 years ($N = 73$; 91.25%), while the remainder were aged 31-40 years ($N = 7$; 8.75%). The overall mean age of participants was 24 years ($SD = 4.09$). The majority of participants had worked for more than 2 years ($N = 55$; 68.75%), the remainder had worked for more than 1 year ($N = 25$; 31.25%). The majority of participants worked full-time ($N = 49$; 61.25%), the remainder worked part-time ($N = 31$; 38.75%). The reasons for choosing to study while working were very diverse, but the majority of participants' reasons were the need for self-actualization ($N = 37$; 46.25%), then financial needs ($N = 28$; 35%), the rest were due to social and other needs ($N = 15$; 18.75%). The sampling technique used in this research is purposive sampling, namely a technique for determining samples based on the objectives of the research (Sukardi, 2014).

The Student-Life Stressor Inventory scale, which was adapted from the scale developed by Gadzela and Masten (2005), was used to measure the academic stress scale in this study. The two components of academic stress—academic stressors and reactions to academic stressors—are the foundation of this scale's structure. "As a student, I experience frustration because of my delays in understanding the lecture material taught by the lecturer" is an example of an item from the academic stressor dimension. The academic stressor reaction dimension then gives examples of items such as "during exams in subjects I was not good at, my stomach became problematic, such as nausea and/or heartburn." The response criteria in this study span from 1 to 4. The alternate responses are always, frequently, never, and sometimes. This scale had 51 items at first, but 22 were removed due to inadequate item discrimination, leaving 29 items in use. The reliability coefficient for the academic stress scale is 0.914.

The COPE inventory scale was adjusted by researchers based on characteristics of problem-focused coping (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989), including (1) active coping, (2) planning, (3) suppression of competing activities, (4) restraint coping, and (5) seeking instrumental social support. This allowed for the measurement of the problem-focused coping scale. "I use alternative methods to solve existing problems" is an example of an active coping item. "I try to create strategies to solve problems" is an example of a planning aspect item. The statement "I put aside other activities to concentrate on solving problems" is an example of an item from the suppression of competing activities aspect. "I do not take any action until the situation allows it" is an example of a constraint coping item. "I try to seek help and advice from other people" is

an example of a statement from the seeking of instrumental social support component. The response criteria in this study range from 1 to 4. The other responses are never, occasionally, frequently, and always. This scale had sixty items at first. Because they limited their selection to items pertaining to problem-focused coping, the researchers in this study only used 20 items total. The reliability coefficient for the problem-focused coping scale is 0.916.

This study makes use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for Windows Release 22.00 to analyze data using basic linear regression analysis. An equation for predicting a variable from other known variables is created using regression.

Results and Discussion

The research hypothesis test's results, which indicated that a significance value of 0.002 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained, indicated that H_a was accepted and H_0 was rejected. These results indicate that there are significant effects of problem focused coping on academic stress in working students. Can be seen in Table 1. The F value obtained is equal to 10.162 with a significance value of 0.002 (≤ 0.05).

Table 1. Result of Anova Test

Model	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1439.882	1	1439.882	10.162	.002 ^b
Residual	11052.105	78	141.694		
Total	12491.988	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Stres akademik

b. Predictors: (Constant), Problem focused coping

In Table 2. the value of the determination coefficient (R^2) is 0.115. This explains that problem focused coping can be an influential factor on academic stress in Working Students by 11.5%. The other 88.5% is determined by variables unrelated to problem-focused coping.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Sig	t	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,340	0,115	0,002	-3,188	0,104	11,904

In Table 3. Both problem-focused coping and the degree of academic stress encountered by working students fell into the medium category in this study. In working students, there is a negative correlation between problem-focused coping and academic stress: the greater the academic stress, the less problem-focused coping is used. Conversely, among working students, the greater the use of problem-focused coping, the lower the level of academic stress. **In Table 4.** Furthermore, there is a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) between academic stressors and problem-focused coping.

Table 3. Result For Mean Empiric and Mean Hipotetic

Skala	Mean Empirik (ME)	Mean Hipotetik (MH)	Kategori
Academic Stress	63,48	72,5	Sedang
Problem Focused Coping	58,56	50	Sedang

Table 4. Relationships between Academic Stress Dimensions and Problem-Focused Coping

	R	R Square	t	Sig.
Academic Stressors	0.448	0.200	11.762/-4.420	0.000
Reactions to Academic Stressors	0.078	0.006	6.420/-0.688	0.494

Students who study while working report that their level of academic stress is influenced by problem-focused coping. Successful tactics help the person fulfill his two roles as a worker and a student more effectively. Students who work and study together frequently respond to different problems with a higher level of maturity. This occurs as a result of their familiarity with the workplace and their past encounters with obstacles there. Their academic obligations and work demands combine to provide them with the chance to hone a range of skills, including problem-solving, time management, and flexibility. According to Ferdiawan, Raharjo, and Rachim (2020), students who study while working typically have a more mature and wise perspective when facing academic challenges and have a greater tendency to take appropriate action in overcoming various problems that arise.

Students who work while they study frequently struggle to balance their time between work, school, and office responsibilities, which can lead to pressure-filled situations. Students who study while working may experience stress from a variety of sources, including this uncomfortable situation. Because, problem-focused coping directly addresses the source of stress—high academic demands and work obligations—it can help students who study while working feel less stressed academically. Furthermore, problem focused coping entails students' deliberate efforts to ascertain and implement the best course of action to prevent, eliminate, or markedly improve stressful situations by promptly planning and attending to them in order to prevent problems from getting worse and building up (Delongis & Newth, 1998).

According to Furman, Joseph, and Perrin (2018), students who study while working who believe they have control over their circumstances are more likely to find that problem-focused coping works better at reducing academic stress. Because of the solid psychological foundation that these ideas provide for constructive action and constructive change. Students who study while working are more likely to be proactive in finding answers, organizing the steps that need to be taken, and acting with greater purpose when they feel confident in their ability to solve problems. In addition to feeling empowered to confront academic challenges, students also experience a sense of agency over their own lives, which enables them to be less enmeshed in feelings of uncertainty and more realistic, objective, and focused on practical steps that can positively impact circumstances. defenseless (Bakhtiar & Asriani, 2015; Kumar & Side, 2015; Stuart & Sundeen, 2005).

Permatasari and Utami (2018), also found that a successful approach results in long-term adaptation, which forms new habits and enhances existing circumstances. Thus, as can generally be observed from the cumulative achievement index, the outcomes can have an impact on the academic success of students who study while working, according to Agustiningsih (2019) and Kurnia (2011). Therefore, problem-focused coping can influence academic success and adaptation, which in turn can lessen the academic stress faced by students juggling the demands of both work and college. As a result, students who study while working need to have the appropriate approach for resolving problems that arise in their lives (Rahma et al, 2023).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the research's findings, it can be said that students who study while working can reduce their academic stress by using problem-focused coping strategies. When a student believes that he can control and alter the circumstances, problem-focused coping becomes more effective and allows him to be more realistic, objective, and focused on taking practical action to solve a problem that arises in everyday life. The researcher also hopes that additional research will broaden the scope of the study, specifically by including the optimism variable as a moderator variable for academic stress and problem-focused coping. In addition, you can enlarge the sample size to ensure that the research findings more accurately reflect the traits of students who work jobs in addition to their studies.

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