

Students' Academic Resilience to Face Competitive Pressure in The Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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This study aims to describe and analyze the academic resilience of students in facing competitive pressure in the digital era. This study departs from the phenomenon of increasing academic competition which is influenced by the ease of access to information, exposure to the achievements of other individuals, and productivity demands that develop through various digital platforms. This condition encourages students to develop the ability to survive and adapt in order to be able to achieve their academic goals. The research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type carried out at Nurul Jadid University, Paiton, Probolinggo. The research informants consist of students who are selected purposively based on their experience in dealing with the dynamics of academic competition. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, documentation, and findings in the field, then analyzed using interactive models through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that students' academic resilience is formed through academic adaptability and effective stress management strategies. These findings imply the importance of strengthening the academic environment that supports the development of students' adaptability, pressure management, and learning resilience in facing educational challenges in the digital era.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has significantly changed the landscape of higher education. Students are not only required to complete academic obligations, but also face increasingly open competition through various digital platforms. Information about academic achievements, scholarships, scientific competitions, certifications, and career opportunities can be accessed easily and quickly by all students (Maryani et al., 2022). This condition creates a wider competition space than in the previous era because each individual can compare his or her achievements with other students at the same time (Ikeda et al., 2025). On the one hand, this phenomenon encourages increased motivation and learning productivity. But on the other hand, not a few students experience pressure due to the demands to always excel and follow developments that take place quickly. This phenomenon shows that the

academic life of students in the digital era is not only characterized by easy access to information, but also by increasing competitive pressures that require academic resilience so that students are able to survive and develop optimally.

Academic resilience is understood as the ability of individuals to survive, adapt, and bounce back when facing various challenges in the educational process (Rajawat & Chaturvedi, 2024). This concept is becoming increasingly relevant in the digital era because students are in a dynamic, complex, and demanding learning environment. Academic resilience is not only related to the ability to overcome learning difficulties, but also includes the ability to manage pressure, maintain motivation, and adjust learning strategies to changes that occur (Abdolrezaipoor et al., 2023). In the context of higher education, students who have a good level of academic resilience tend to be better able to cope with academic burdens, competitive demands, and changes in the learning system (Ucan & Avci, 2023). These abilities also contribute to the sustainability of academic achievement and readiness to face future challenges. Therefore, academic resilience is seen as one of the important aspects that support the success of students in undergoing the educational process in an increasingly competitive and dynamic digital era.

Previous research (Caporale-Berkowitz et al., 2022) shows that academic resilience has a close relationship with student success in dealing with educational pressures. Some studies highlight the role of learning motivation, social support, and self-efficacy as factors that affect students' academic resilience levels (Labrague, 2024). Other research (Tosun & Çetin, 2025) explained that students who have good adaptability tend to be better able to maintain their academic performance when facing task pressure and achievement demands. In addition, a number of studies also confirm that the development of digital technology has presented new challenges in the form of increased exposure to other people's achievements which can affect the psychological condition of students (Ojha et al., 2021) and (Szawarnoga et al., 2025). Nonetheless, most previous research has still focused on individual factors that affect academic resilience or the impact of technology use on learning. The study, which specifically reveals students' experiences in building academic resilience when facing competitive pressures in the digital era, is still relatively limited and requires further in-depth.

Based on a study of various previous studies, it was found that discussions about academic resilience generally focused on aspects of learning motivation, academic stress, self-efficacy, and social support separately. Research linking

academic resilience to the phenomenon of digital competition has not been widely done, especially in the context of students' experiences in the university environment. In addition, most studies tend to use a quantitative approach so that they have not been able to describe in depth how students interpret competitive pressures and develop strategies to deal with them. This gap is an important basis for this study to examine academic resilience through the perspective of students' direct experiences. The novelty of the research lies in the effort to uncover the academic adaptation process and pressure management strategies built by students in facing competition in the digital era. Thus, this study not only explains the factors that affect academic resilience, but also describes the dynamics of its formation more comprehensively.

This study aims to describe and analyze the academic resilience of students in facing competitive pressure in the digital era. The focus of the research is directed at students' experiences in adjusting to increasingly competitive academic demands, managing the pressures that arise during the lecture process, and maintaining the continuity of learning activities in the midst of the ever-evolving development of information technology. The research also seeks to identify the various strategies that students use to deal with the pressure of competition without neglecting the academic goals they want to achieve. The focus was chosen because students are a group that directly feels the change in competition patterns due to advances in digital technology. Through an in-depth study of student experience, this research is expected to be able to provide a complete picture of the forms of academic resilience that develop in student life and the factors that support the formation of these abilities in the context of today's higher education.

Research on student academic resilience is important because the pressure of competition in the digital era continues to increase along with open access to information and the development of various forms of technology-based academic activities. Today's students are not only competing in the classroom, but also in various digital spaces that allow achievement comparisons to take place continuously. These conditions have the potential to affect motivation, psychological well-being, and the sustainability of the student learning process if they are not balanced with adequate resilience skills. On the other hand, academic resilience is a capacity that can help students face challenges more adaptively and productively. This research is important because it can provide an understanding of how students build academic resilience in the face of increasingly complex competitive pressures. The results of the research are

expected to be the basis for the development of student mentoring strategies and the strengthening of the academic environment that supports learning success in the digital era.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research seeks to understand in depth students' experiences, views, and responses in dealing with the pressure of academic competition in the digital era. The focus of the research is not directed at measuring the relationship between variables, but rather to uncover the meaning that emerges from students' real experiences when adapting to increasingly competitive academic demands (Ivey, 2023). This type of descriptive research is used to describe various phenomena related to academic resilience systematically based on data obtained in the field. Through this approach, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of students' strategies in maintaining academic performance, managing pressure, and utilizing the various resources available. The qualitative approach also allows researchers to explore the social and academic context behind the formation of students' academic resilience in the higher education environment in the digital era that continues to change (Al Muqarshi, 2024).

The material object in this study is the phenomenon of student academic resilience in facing competitive pressure in the digital era. The focus of the study is directed at students' ability to adapt to academic demands, manage pressures arising from competition, and maintain the continuity of learning activities in the midst of increasingly rapid development of information technology. The research was carried out at Nurul Jadid University, Paiton, Probolinggo, as one of the universities that actively develops digital technology-based learning. The research subjects consist of students who are selected purposively based on the consideration that they have direct experience in dealing with the dynamics of academic competition during the lecture process. Informants were selected from various backgrounds of academic activities to obtain diverse and in-depth data. The selection of subjects is carried out until the data obtained shows the adequacy of information so that it can provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied.

Data collection in this study was carried out through in-depth interviews, documentation, and recording of findings in the field. In-depth interviews are used as the main technique to obtain information about students' experiences, perceptions, and strategies in dealing with the pressure of academic competition

in the digital era. The interview process is carried out in a semi-structured manner so that it allows researchers to explore data flexibly according to the development of information provided by the informant. In addition to interviews, documentation is used to supplement research data through various relevant documents, such as academic records, digital learning activities, and other supporting documents related to the research focus. Findings in the field are also systematically recorded to obtain an overview of the real conditions that support the interview results. The use of several data collection techniques aims to produce rich, in-depth data, and is able to describe the phenomenon of student academic resilience in its entirety according to the research context.

Data analysis is carried out in stages from the data collection process until the research is completed. Analysis techniques refer to interactive models that include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out by selecting, focusing, and grouping information that is relevant to the research focus on student academic resilience. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of a thematic narrative to make it easier for researchers to identify patterns and relationships between findings. The final stage is carried out through drawing conclusions based on the interpretation of all the data that has been collected. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation and triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from several informants, while technical triangulation is carried out through comparison of interview data, documentation, and findings in the field. The process is carried out repeatedly to increase the credibility, consistency, and validity of the research results.

RESULT

Academic Adaptability in the Face of Digital Competition

Academic adaptability is the capacity of students to adapt to changes in the learning environment, academic demands, and competition dynamics that develop in the digital era. This adaptation is not only related to technical ability to utilize learning technology, but also includes mental readiness in the face of competition for achievements, increasingly open access to information, and increasingly high productivity demands. In the context of this research, academic adaptability is understood as students' efforts to maintain learning performance through strategic adjustments, time management, and competency development that are relevant to today's academic needs. This theme is important because the digital era presents various opportunities as well as competitive pressures that can affect the sustainability of student studies. Therefore, adaptability is one of the main indicators that shows the level of academic resilience of students in

facing increasingly complex and dynamic competition challenges.

The results of the interviews show that students face various forms of academic competition that have become increasingly intense since the development of digital technology. Ease of access to information and increased exposure to other students' achievements encourage them to continue to adjust to existing academic demands. In this situation, adaptability is one of the ways that students use to survive and develop. One of the informants M. Arif explained: "I feel that the competition is now more pronounced because there is a lot of information about the achievements of friends that appears on social media. At first I felt left behind, but then I tried to improve the way I learned and set more realistic goals." The same thing was also expressed by the informant Ach. Fahim who emphasized the importance of adjusting learning strategies. "When I see many students participating in competitions or obtaining academic achievements, I try to find a more effective way to learn. I started using digital platforms to look for references and develop my skills." Based on this statement, it can be seen that students not only feel the pressure of competition, but also try to adjust to the conditions they face. This shows that academic adaptation is an important part of maintaining the sustainability of the learning process in the digital era.

Through the results of the interview conducted with the informant above, it can be seen that the pressure of competition in the digital era does not always produce a negative impact on students. Instead, this pressure encourages the emergence of various forms of academic adjustment that are consciously made by students to maintain their learning performance. The first informant showed a change from feeling left behind to an effort to improve learning strategies and set more measurable targets. Meanwhile, the second informant displayed a form of adaptation through the use of digital learning resources to increase their academic capacity. These findings show that students are not passive to the pressures of competition, but rather take actions that allow them to remain productive in a competitive academic environment. The adaptation also demonstrates the ability to identify challenges, evaluate one's condition, and determine the most appropriate steps to maintain academic success in the midst of rapid change.

Table 1. Forms of Student Adaptation to Face Digital Competition

Forms of Academic Adaptation	Practices Carried Out by Students	Impact on Academic Resilience
Utilization of learning technology	Access e-journals, e-books, learning videos, and online learning platforms	To make it easier to find information and improve the ability to understand lecture materials
Adjustment of	Develop study schedules, set	Help students stay focused and able

learning strategies	academic goals, and prioritize tasks	to complete academic demands consistently
Self-competency development	Attend webinars, online training, and supporting academic activities	Improve academic ability and readiness to face competition
Digital learning collaboration	Forming discussion groups through instant messaging apps and online platforms	Expanding access to information and strengthening academic support between students
Academic time management	Leverage task reminder apps and learning activity management	Helping students reduce assignment delays and increase learning productivity

Academic adaptability is an important form of resilience in facing competitive pressure in the digital era. Students who are able to adjust to changes in the learning environment show a better tendency to maintain their academic productivity. This adaptation is realized through changes in learning strategies, the use of digital technology, the management of academic targets, and involvement in various competency development activities. The findings of this study also show that the pressure of competition is not always perceived as an obstacle, but can be an encouragement for students to improve their quality and develop their abilities. The emerging pattern shows that the higher the ability of students to adapt to digital academic demands, the stronger their ability to survive, develop, and maintain academic performance in the midst of a competitive and changing educational environment.

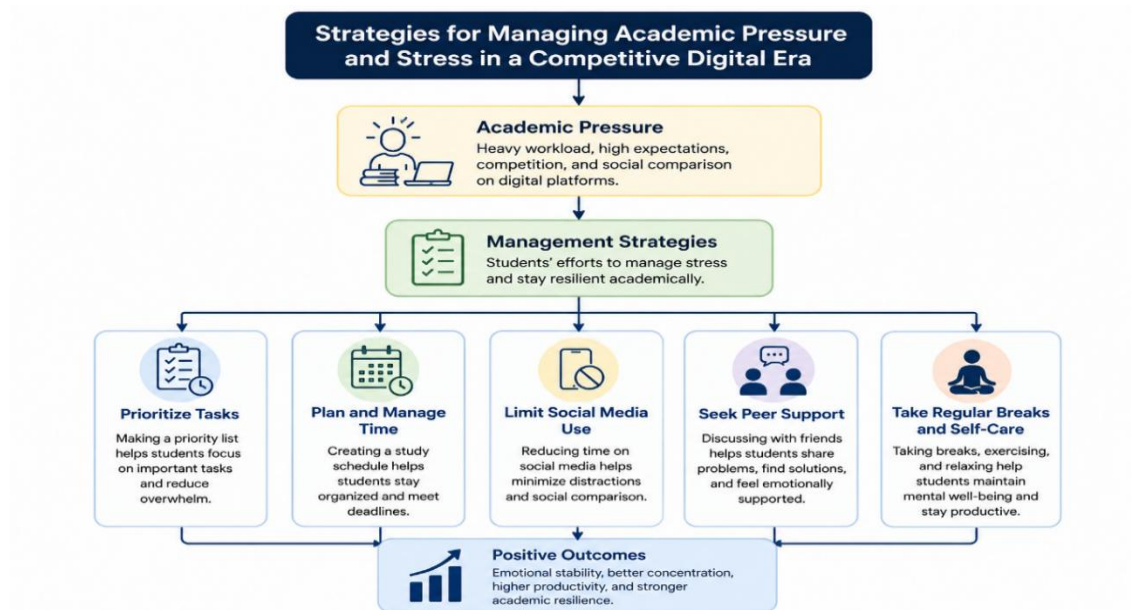
Strategies for Managing Academic Stress and Stress

Academic stress and stress management strategies are various efforts made by students to control psychological, emotional, and academic responses when facing high learning demands and increasingly fierce competition in the digital era. Academic pressure can arise from achievement targets, workload, demands to always be productive, to comparison of achievements that are easily accessible through digital media. In the context of this study, pressure management strategies are understood as students' ability to recognize sources of stress, regulate responses to stressful situations, and maintain academic stability so as not to experience a decline in learning performance. This ability is an important part of academic resilience because it allows students to stay focused on their educational goals even in a competitive environment. Therefore, academic stress and stress management strategies are aspects that show how students are able to maintain the continuity of their studies effectively in the midst of various challenges of the digital era that continue to develop.

The results of the interviews show that students are inseparable from the academic pressure that arises due to the increasingly high competition in the digital era. Various academic demands and exposure to the success of other students often give rise to feelings of anxiety, worry, and fear of being left behind.

Nonetheless, students try to develop various strategies to manage this pressure so as not to interfere with their learning process. One of the informants, Ifan Muannas, revealed: "Sometimes I feel depressed when I see my friends having many achievements or being active in various activities. But I try to focus on my own development and not compare myself to others too often." A similar statement was also delivered by Tomy's informant who emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance of academic activities. "When assignments pile up and my lecture schedule is busy, I usually make a list of priorities. That way I was calmer and could get the work done one at a time without feeling too overwhelmed." Both statements show that students are aware of the academic pressures they face. Nevertheless, they try to manage these pressures through various strategies that help maintain the stability of the learning process.

Through the results of the interviews conducted with the informants above, it was found that academic pressure in the digital era does not only come from the demands of lectures, but is also influenced by the competitive environment formed through various digital platforms. The first informant showed that pressure arises when comparing one's own achievements with other students. However, this condition is responded to by shifting the focus to self-development so that the pressure felt can be controlled. Meanwhile, the second informant shows a form of pressure management through the preparation of academic priorities that allow tasks and responsibilities to be completed in a more structured manner. These findings show that students have the awareness to recognize the sources of the stress they are experiencing and work to find ways to cope with them. The strategy used is not oriented towards problem avoidance, but rather on managing conditions that allow students to continue to carry out academic activities optimally even in demanding and competitive situations.



Strategies for managing academic stress and stress are an important part of students' academic resilience in the digital era. Students realize that increasingly high competition can create pressure that affects psychological conditions and academic performance. However, this pressure does not always lead to a decrease in motivation to learn because students develop various strategies to control the situation they are facing. The findings show that students who are able to recognize sources of stress and implement appropriate management measures tend to be better able to maintain academic consistency. Strategies such as prioritizing, scheduling, limiting social media exposure, and utilizing peer support are widely practiced in the face of competitive pressure. These findings suggest that stress management skills not only help students survive in a competitive academic environment, but also strengthen their capacity to achieve academic goals on an ongoing basis.

DISCUSSION

The first results show that academic adaptability plays an important role in shaping student resilience when facing competitive pressure in the digital era. Students who are able to adjust learning strategies, utilize learning technology, and develop self-competence tend to be better prepared to face changing academic demands. These findings are in line with previous studies that show that academic adaptation is an important factor in maintaining learning success in a dynamic educational environment (Voisin et al., 2023). Adaptability allows students to turn the pressure of competition into an encouragement to improve academic quality (Zhao & Zhang, 2024). In addition, the use of digital learning resources provides wider opportunities for students to acquire new knowledge

and skills. This condition shows that academic resilience is not formed instantly, but develops through a continuous process of adaptation to various academic challenges. Thus, adaptability is the main foundation in maintaining the sustainability of students' academic performance in an increasingly competitive digital education environment.

The second results show that academic stress and stress management strategies are important mechanisms that help students maintain learning stability in the midst of increasingly intense competition. Students in this study showed a tendency to manage pressure through the preparation of task priorities, setting study schedules, limiting the use of social media, and utilizing peer support. These results are in line with the findings of other studies that explain that the ability to manage stress contributes to increased study focus and academic resilience of students (Namaziandost & Çelik, 2025). Competition pressure that is not managed properly has the potential to cause academic fatigue, while effective management allows students to remain productive and able to achieve learning targets (Niyazova, 2021). These findings also show that students are not only trying to reduce sources of pressure, but are trying to build a more constructive response pattern to various academic demands. Therefore, pressure management can be understood as an integral part of the process of building academic resilience in the digital era.

Overall, this study shows that students' academic resilience is formed through a combination of academic adaptability and effective stress management strategies. Both findings show a pattern that students who are able to adapt to change and manage pressure appropriately tend to be better able to maintain their academic performance. These findings indicate that academic resilience is not only related to the ability to survive, but also the ability to thrive in a competitive environment. However, this study has limitations because it focuses on student experiences in certain contexts so that the results cannot be generalized widely to all college students. In addition, the limited number of informants causes the variety of experiences gained to be not fully representative of all student conditions. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more diverse informants and examine other factors that have the potential to affect students' academic resilience in the digital era.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that students' academic resilience in facing competitive pressure in the digital era is formed through academic adaptability and pressure management strategies that are carried out in a sustainable manner. Students

who are able to adapt to changes in the learning environment, utilize digital technology productively, and develop flexible learning strategies tend to be better able to maintain their academic performance. In addition, the ability to manage pressure through prioritization, timing, social comparison restrictions, and the use of peer support also strengthens students' academic resilience. In general, the findings of this study show that academic resilience not only functions as an ability to survive competitive pressures, but also as a means for students to develop adaptively in the face of various demands of higher education in the digital era. Thus, academic resilience can be understood as an important foundation in supporting student learning success in an increasingly competitive academic environment.

Although this study successfully illustrates students' experiences in building academic resilience, the research still has some limitations. The research findings were obtained from a limited number of informants and were in one university context so that the research results could not describe all the characteristics of students in various higher education environments. In addition, the focus of the research is only directed at students' experiences in dealing with the pressure of academic competition so that it does not include other factors that may affect academic resilience more broadly. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more diverse informants, both from different academic and institutional backgrounds, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture. Future research can also examine the relationship between academic resilience and other aspects such as psychological well-being, digital literacy, family support, and academic culture so as to produce a deeper and more comprehensive understanding.

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