

THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND RELIGIOUS WORSHIP IN ENHANCING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction. This study aims to examine the role of self-efficacy and worship practices in enhancing the psychological well-being of university students in Indonesia. The growing prevalence of stress, anxiety, and academic adjustment difficulties among students in recent years highlights the need for both psychological and spiritual approaches to support student development. Within this context, self-efficacy is understood as a cognitive-motivational resource that strengthens students' confidence in managing academic demands, while worship practices are viewed as spiritual activities that nurture emotional balance and inner meaning.

Research Methods. This study employed a quantitative research design involving 10 university students from various faculties in Indonesia. Participants were selected using a collective sampling technique. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires measuring self-efficacy, worship practices, and psychological well-being. All instruments used Likert-type scales to assess the intensity of each construct.

Data Analysis. The collected data were analyzed using statistical procedures to examine the relationships and combined effects of self-efficacy and worship practices on psychological well-being. The analysis focused on identifying both individual and joint contributions of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

Results. The findings indicate that self-efficacy serves as a cognitive and motivational foundation that enhances adaptive coping strategies, effective learning planning, and academic resilience. Worship practices were found to contribute to emotional regulation, a stronger sense of meaning in life, and spiritual social support. Furthermore, the combination of self-efficacy and worship practices operates synergistically as a protective factor against academic stress. Together, these variables strengthen key dimensions of psychological well-being, including self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy, and personal growth.

Conclusion. Self-efficacy and worship practices play complementary roles in promoting psychological well-being among university students. Their integration offers a holistic framework that addresses both cognitive and spiritual aspects of student life. These findings suggest practical implications for

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developing comprehensive mentoring and counseling programs within higher education institutions to support students' mental health and overall development.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy, worship practices, psychology*

A. INTRODUCTION

University students are increasingly confronted with substantial academic demands, social expectations, and ongoing role transitions, all of which have been associated with a rising prevalence of stress and mental health concerns. Empirical studies conducted during and after the COVID nineteen pandemic have documented a significant increase in stress levels among Indonesian university students, underscoring the urgent need for both promotive and preventive mental health strategies within higher education settings (Anindya & Trihastuti, 2022). These challenges do not occur in isolation but interact with developmental tasks unique to emerging adulthood, thereby intensifying vulnerability to psychological strain. As universities continue to navigate post pandemic academic environments, identifying protective psychological and contextual factors has become increasingly important. Addressing student well-being therefore requires approaches that extend beyond academic support and incorporate broader psychological resources.

Islamic psychology offers an important theoretical and practical framework for understanding students' psychological dynamics, particularly in relation to psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and the search for meaning in life. Within the context of modern academic life, which is often characterized by competition and performance pressure, spirituality and religious practices have been shown to function as sources of emotional calm, self-regulation, and mental resilience. Prior research has suggested that spiritual engagement helps individuals reinterpret stressors through a meaning-based perspective, thereby reducing psychological distress (Warsah, 2020). In predominantly Muslim societies such as Indonesia, religious values and practices remain deeply embedded in daily life and continue to influence coping behaviors. Consequently, integrating Islamic psychological perspectives into student mental health research is both culturally relevant and theoretically enriching.

Spiritual intelligence has been widely associated with individuals' capacity for emotional regulation and adaptive coping. Students with higher levels of spiritual intelligence tend to demonstrate greater flexibility in responding to academic and social stressors, as they are better able to anchor their experiences in broader existential and moral frameworks. Moreover, spiritual intelligence has been found to

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strengthen self-efficacy, defined as one's belief in the ability to organize and execute actions required to manage prospective situations (Warsah, 2021). This interrelationship suggests that spiritual resources may enhance students' confidence in their personal agency when facing academic challenges. Rather than functioning as an abstract construct, spiritual intelligence operates through daily cognitive and emotional processes that influence motivation and persistence. Understanding this relationship is essential for explaining how students sustain psychological balance under pressure.

Self-efficacy has consistently been identified as a robust predictor of coping capacity, academic motivation, and learning performance. Students who possess high self-efficacy are more likely to perceive academic difficulties as manageable and to employ adaptive self-regulation strategies when confronted with setbacks. Such students typically exhibit greater resilience, persistence, and goal orientation in the face of academic stress (Athia, 2024). Self-efficacy not only shapes how students evaluate their abilities but also influences emotional responses to challenges, including anxiety and frustration. In this sense, self-efficacy functions as a key psychological mechanism that mediates the relationship between stressors and well-being outcomes. Examining self-efficacy within a culturally embedded context allows for a more nuanced understanding of its role in student mental health.

In the Indonesian context, where Muslim students constitute a majority in many universities, religious worship practices play a nontrivial role in emotional regulation and psychological adjustment. Practices such as daily prayer, supplication, Qur'anic recitation, and remembrance of God have been reported to promote emotional calm, reduce anxiety, and foster a sense of life meaning. Local studies have demonstrated positive associations between religiosity or spirituality and students' mental health outcomes, including reduced stress and enhanced psychological well-being (Lusy, 2024). These practices often function as structured routines that provide emotional grounding and reflective space amid academic demands. Beyond ritual performance, worship may serve as a cognitive and emotional resource that reshapes how stress is perceived and managed. This suggests that religious practice may complement psychological constructs such as self-efficacy in supporting student well-being.

Psychological well-being is commonly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing self-acceptance, positive interpersonal relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Students who score highly across these dimensions tend to demonstrate more effective academic and social adaptation. Psychological well-being is not merely the absence of distress but reflects the presence of positive psychological functioning and life

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engagement. For university students, maintaining psychological well-being is closely linked to academic persistence, social integration, and overall life satisfaction (Nasih, 2024). Consequently, identifying factors that promote these dimensions is of significant relevance for higher education policy and student support services. A comprehensive understanding of psychological well-being must therefore account for both internal psychological resources and external contextual influences.

Despite the growing body of research on self-efficacy and religiosity, the interaction between self-efficacy and worship practices has received limited qualitative attention within Indonesian university contexts. In particular, little is known about how these two factors mutually reinforce one another in students' subjective experiences when confronting academic stress. Exploring this interaction from a qualitative perspective allows for deeper insight into the lived meanings, coping processes, and internal strategies that students employ. Narrative evidence can illuminate the psychological and spiritual mechanisms through which self-efficacy and worship jointly support well-being (Athia, 2024). Such insights are difficult to capture through quantitative measures alone, highlighting the value of qualitative inquiry in this area.

Previous research in Indonesia has predominantly relied on quantitative survey methods, which are valuable for identifying general patterns but often lack depth in capturing personal meaning and experiential processes. A qualitative phenomenological approach offers an opportunity to explore how students interpret and make sense of their experiences, including the role of self-efficacy and ritual practices in coping with academic stress. This approach facilitates a richer understanding of students' internal worlds and the symbolic significance of their coping strategies. The findings are expected to provide nuanced insights that can inform evidence-based interventions tailored to campus environments. Qualitative evidence is particularly valuable for designing culturally sensitive support programs.

Accordingly, this study seeks to address several key questions. How do university students interpret the role of self-efficacy and worship practices in their academic lives. What psychological and spiritual mechanisms underlie the contribution of these factors to psychological well-being. What types of support programs may be most effective in fostering student well-being within university settings (Utami, 2020). The primary objective of this study is to explore students' lived experiences regarding the role of self-efficacy and religious practices in managing academic stress and enhancing psychological well-being. In addition, the study aims to formulate practical implications for student support and mentoring programs in higher education institutions (Lusy, 2024).

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B. LITERATURE REVIEW**1. Self-Efficacy**

The concept of self-efficacy was developed by Bandura (1977, 1997) as a central component of social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy influences individuals' choices of activities, the amount of effort they invest, their persistence in the face of obstacles, and their affective reactions to challenges. In the context of higher education, academic self-efficacy is closely associated with learning strategies, time management, and resilience when confronting demanding academic tasks. Empirical studies conducted in Indonesia (e.g., quantitative research among nursing and psychology students) have demonstrated that higher levels of self-efficacy are negatively correlated with academic stress and positively associated with academic achievement (Athia, 2024).

From a psychological perspective, self-efficacy enhances cognitive control processes such as planning and sustained attention, reduces emotional reactivity to stressors, and facilitates the use of adaptive, problem-focused coping strategies (e.g., task segmentation and active engagement in seeking learning resources). These mechanisms help to diminish feelings of helplessness and strengthen an internal locus of control, both of which are crucial for psychological well-being (Alifia & Syah, 2022).

2. Worship and Spirituality as Emotion Regulation

Religious worship functions not only as a formal ritual practice but also as a structured form of emotion regulation through rhythm, repetition, transcendent focus, and communal support. In Indonesian scholarship, worship practices have been associated with reduced anxiety, increased optimism, and a strengthened sense of meaning, all of which contribute to Ryff's psychological dimensions, particularly self-acceptance and purpose in life. In addition, social support derived from religious communities further reinforces protective social networks (Dina, 2024).

The theory of religiosity as coping (Pargament et al., adapted to local contexts) conceptualizes religious coping as either positive, such as fostering hope and meaning, or negative, such as attributing blame to God or engaging in social withdrawal. Local studies emphasize that worship practices experienced as meaningful tend to yield psychological benefits. Accordingly, an understanding of cultural context and the quality of worship experience, rather than mere frequency, is considered essential (Zahra, 2023).

3. Integration of Self Efficacy and Worship

An integrative model proposes that self-efficacy provides cognitive and motivational capacity, while worship offers an affective and existential framework.

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This combination produces cognitive and emotional harmony: self-efficacy encourages adaptive action, whereas worship stabilizes emotional states and provides a narrative of meaning that allows stressors to be cognitively reframed. In depth local qualitative research is able to identify detailed themes related to this process (Dina, 2024).

4. Psychological Well-Being

Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as comprising six dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Within the university context, interventions targeting self-efficacy and spirituality have the potential to enhance most of these dimensions. Local evidence from the period 2020 to 2024 indicates that integrated programs combining self-regulation training and spiritual support have demonstrated positive outcomes (ULM Journal Center).

C. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research method with the objective of understanding the subjective meaning of lived experience. The population was selected using collective sampling and consisted of ten university students, comprising five male and five female participants from various faculties, namely Tarbiyah, Sharia and Islamic Economics, as well as Ushuluddin Adab and Da'wah. The participants were between nineteen and twenty-four years of age and were recommended by academic supervisors based on variation in levels of self-efficacy (low, moderate, and high) and frequency of worship practice (routine, occasional, and non-routine).

The research instrument consisted of a questionnaire addressing experiences of academic stress, examples of situations in which self-efficacy played a role, detailed descriptions of worship practices, emotional experiences during or after worship, and perceptions of psychological wellbeing.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**1. Results**

This section presents the findings of the study concerning student self-efficacy, the frequency of worship practices, and the level of academic stress among university students. The data are displayed in three tables to provide a clear overview of the distribution and characteristics of the respondents.

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The first set of findings relates to student self-efficacy across several faculties. The distribution of self-efficacy scores is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Self-Efficacy

No	Initials	Gender	Faculty	Self-Efficacy (1-4)	Category
1	M1	Male	Tarbiyah	3.8	High
2	M2	Female	Sharia	3.6	High
3	M3	Male	Islamic Economics	2.4	Moderate
4	M4	Female	Ushuluddin	2.2	Moderate
5	M5	Male	Da'wah	1.8	Low
6	M6	Female	Tarbiyah	3.2	High
7	M7	Male	Sharia	2.0	Low
8	M8	Female	Islamic Economics	3.4	High
9	M9	Male	Ushuluddin	2.6	Moderate
10	M10	Female	Da'wah	1.6	Low

As shown in Table 1, four students were categorized as having high self-efficacy, three were classified in the moderate category, and three fell into the low category, out of a total of ten respondents. Although the distribution is relatively balanced, the largest proportion of students demonstrated high self-efficacy. This suggests that, overall, students from various faculties tend to possess a relatively strong belief in their academic capabilities.

The second set of findings concerns the frequency of students' worship practices, including obligatory prayer, voluntary prayer, and Qur'an recitation. The detailed distribution is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of Worship Practices

No	Initials	Obligatory Prayer	Voluntary Prayer	Qur'an Recitation
1	M1	Routine	Occasional	Routine
2	M2	Routine	Routine	Routine
3	M3	Routine	Never	Occasional
4	M4	Occasional	Never	Occasional
5	M5	Occasional	Never	Never
6	M6	Routine	Occasional	Routine

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7	M7	Nonroutine	Never	Never
8	M8	Routine	Routine	Routine
9	M9	Routine	Occasional	Occasional
10	M10	Nonroutine	Never	Never

Table 2 indicates that six students performed obligatory prayer routinely, two performed it occasionally, and two reported performing it in a nonroutine manner. Regarding voluntary prayer, only two students practiced it routinely, three did so occasionally, and five reported never performing voluntary prayer. In terms of Qur'an recitation, four students engaged in this practice routinely, three did so occasionally, and three reported never reciting the Qur'an. Overall, the findings show that obligatory prayer was the most consistently practiced form of worship, while voluntary prayer was the least frequently performed. Qur'an recitation fell between these two in terms of regularity.

The final set of findings addresses the level of academic stress experienced by students, measured through indicators of task load, grade pressure, and time management. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Level of Student Academic Stress

No	Initials	Task Load	Grade Pressure	Time Management	Mean Score	Category
1	M1	2	2	2	2.0	Low
2	M2	2	1	2	1.6	Low
3	M3	3	3	3	3.0	Moderate
4	M4	3	3	2	2.6	Moderate
5	M5	4	4	4	4.0	High
6	M6	2	2	3	2.3	Moderate
7	M7	4	3	4	3.6	High
8	M8	2	1	2	1.6	Low
9	M9	3	3	3	3.0	Moderate
10	M10	4	4	3	3.6	High

Table 3 indicates that three students were classified within the high academic stress category, four students fell into the moderate category, and three students were categorized as experiencing low academic stress out of a total of ten respondents. It can therefore be concluded that the majority of students experienced academic stress at a moderate level.

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2. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that four out of ten respondents who demonstrated high self-efficacy (M1, M2, M6, and M8) tended to experience lower levels of academic stress. This phenomenon is consistent with the findings of Rahmawati (2020), who stated that academic self-confidence functions as a protective factor against study related pressure, as individuals are able to interpret challenges as manageable rather than overwhelming. In this study, students with high self-efficacy described their experiences as being “more capable of self-control,” “more focused during learning,” and “faster in completing assignments.”

These findings are also aligned with research conducted by Warsah (2020), which explained that consistent remembrance practices are able to reduce emotional tension and enhance affective stability. This indicates that spiritual activities are not merely religious routines, but also function as effective techniques of emotion regulation and as coping mechanisms that strengthen students’ capacity to face academic pressure. Individuals with high spiritual intelligence tend to possess stronger self-efficacy, as they perceive themselves as being guided by spiritual values that provide meaning and direction in life (Warsah, 2021).

Worship practices likewise demonstrate a close relationship with stress levels. Students who engaged in routine and intensive worship practices (M2 and M8) exhibited the lowest levels of academic stress. This finding supports the study by Putri and Lestari (2021), which found that ritual worship, particularly prayer and Qur’an recitation, reduces physiological activation of stress and produces emotional calmness. Respondents reported that worship helped to “reduce anxiety,” “lighten the heart,” and “provide a sense of self control.”

In contrast, students with low self-efficacy and non-routine worship practices (M5, M7, and M10) showed high levels of academic stress. These results are reinforced by Mahfud (2022), who demonstrated that low self-confidence and low spirituality are associated with an inability to cope effectively with academic pressure. In interviews, respondents from this group reported feelings of “being unable to complete assignments,” “avoiding academic activities,” and “frequently procrastinating.”

At the experiential level, the majority of respondents described worship as providing positive emotion regulation, including feelings of gratitude, optimism, and inner calm. These findings support the research of Aulia (2023), which showed that spiritual engagement enhances wellbeing and reduces anxiety through processes of self-reflection. In this study, worship functioned as a coping mechanism that influenced how students interpreted academic stress.

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In line with the research conducted by Warsah (2022), spirituality was found to contribute directly to students' psychological wellbeing. Spirituality helps individuals develop resilience, defined as the ability to recover and adapt when facing difficulties. This capacity is closely related to self-efficacy, making it highly relevant to the present study, which found that students who consistently practiced worship demonstrated higher levels of psychological wellbeing (Warsah, 2023).

Overall, the results derived from questionnaires and interviews indicate that self-efficacy and worship practices play complementary roles in shaping students' resilience in facing academic pressure. Students with strong self-confidence and disciplined worship practices exhibited more stable emotion regulation, resulting in relatively lower levels of academic stress (Sari, 2020).

E. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that self-efficacy and worship practices exert a strong influence on students' experiences of academic stress. Students with high self-efficacy and routine worship practices experienced lower levels of stress, demonstrated better emotion regulation, and interpreted academic pressure in a more positive manner. Conversely, students with low self-efficacy and non-routine worship practices experienced higher stress levels and showed a tendency to avoid academic demands. Accordingly, strengthening self-efficacy and improving the quality of worship practices may serve as effective strategies for enhancing students' psychological wellbeing.

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