



Students' Academic Stress in *Hybrid Learning* During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrating a decline in incidence in Indonesia, hybrid learning started to be used. Students exposed to this learning change have academic challenges that lead to academic stress. Students who experience academic stress report feeling overwhelmed, impatient, distant, easily isolated, sensitive, in conflict with peers, and unhappy. This study seeks to provide an overview of the academic stress experienced by hybrid learning participants. Four hundred active university students who participated in hybrid learning were the sample population for this study, which employed a survey methodology. An academic stress scale was used to collect the data, which was then descriptively evaluated using a statistical tool. The findings indicated that academic stress fell into the category of moderate. Students participating in hybrid learning often experience academic stress due to their gender, place of residence, and financial support.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic · Hybrid Learning · Students' Academic Stress

1 Introduction

The unexpected Covid-19 epidemic had a significant effect on a variety of areas, including education. It is being introduced piecemeal to stop the spread of the virus, starting with the closure of schools, then moving on to online learning, and finally implementing a hybrid learning system. The combination of traditional classroom instruction and online learning is called hybrid learning, sometimes blended learning [1]. The most frequent issues with online education are unstable signals, internet quotas, online learning tools, severe workloads, and the inability to focus during online lectures, especially for practical courses. Learning through a hybrid system typically adjusts to shifts in student enrollment at a campus or school. Students may need help organizing a class while maintaining the current timetable. High discipline and focus are necessary to plan a more effective study schedule.

The hybrid learning paradigm was developed as a reaction to modern demands. Hybrid learning is implemented dynamically by incorporating portions of online courses with technology-based learning [2]. In student-centered learning, the emphasis is on

active learning. It is carried out by incorporating various educational tools, including computer and mobile media, television, and videos. Face-to-face instruction is limited because most courses still employ online teaching techniques. Hybrid education is used instead because the number of Covid-19 cases has dropped, which has led to the government allowing activities to become the new standard. However, to attain learning efficacy, traditional methods and face-to-face learning activities are still used [3].

The alteration of these learning methodologies has left teachers and students unprepared to transition from online to hybrid learning. According to a preliminary poll, only 35% of first-year students and 43% of sophomores at a Surabaya-based college are willing to attend in-person classes, even if they live nearby. In other words, most students are eager to enroll in online courses, while fewer pick face-to-face education [1]. Students must, therefore, abruptly establish new routines and step outside of their comfort zones after engaging in online activities for two years [4].

Furthermore, a study shows that only 10% of students choose hybrid learning, even if the university has officially approved its use. Meanwhile, (60%) indicate they are not open to using a mixed teaching/learning approach. This suggests that more pupils do not favor hybrid learning and only a few express enthusiasm for this instruction [5].

In contrast, a study demonstrates that hybrid learning causes students to encounter difficult circumstances when attempting to create a comfortable learning environment because of the adaption of the new learning style. It is caused by the workload, the time difference between in-person and online instruction, student preparation, technological proficiency, and an unsupported infrastructure, particularly for internet access. Thus, this circumstance may impact pupils' psychological issues [5].

Due to the pandemic, students must transition from their online comfort zone to a hybrid learning environment, where the latter has few resources and might lead to high-stress levels. According to a study, hybrid learning students suffer from high-stress levels (66%) and moderate stress levels (26%), as well as low-stress levels (4%). (Reuben, C.C. et al., 2021). The students are under stress due to several issues [6]. This approach will be used for an unspecified period and typical circumstances.

The student's academic stress can be examined based on the component of academic stress, namely stressors and responses to stressors [7]. A condition or occurrence (stimulus) that necessitates self-adjustment outside of routine activities is referred to as a stressor [7]. According to Gadzella and Mansten [8], academic stresses are occasions or circumstances (stimuli) that call for self-adjustment above and above the regular occurrences in daily life. A person's perception of an academic stressor and response to it is also considered part of academic stress [7]. Frustration, disputes, pressure, changes, and self-imposed make up this aspect of academic stress. Many things influence academic stress. According to Kadapatti and Vijayalaxmi (2012), poor study habits, a low socioeconomic status, and a lack of aspiration are the three leading causes of academic stress. Then Bataineh (2013) said that factors contributing to academic stress include an excessive academic load, a lack of desire, high family expectations, a lack of resources, a lack of teacher support, congested study spaces, competition among peers, tardiness, and absenteeism.

Additionally, the dimension of a stressor's reaction is assessed using a cognitive method, specifically the appraisal of the stressor, whether it is pertinent or not, and

whether the person has the plan to deal with it [7]. This dimension is made up of physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive evaluations [7].

Additionally, stress among students can result in sadness, agitation, aloofness, feeling overwhelmed, isolationism, and sensitivity [9]. Thus, due to demands or unresolved issues in the new teaching methodology impacts students' physical and mental health [9].

One of the first steps toward disclosing the academic stress profile of students in a hybrid learning course is the current study. This study tries to comprehend the academic stress that students experience in hybrid learning lectures. It is clear from the different occurrences that have already been addressed that academic stress impacts students' physical and mental health.

2 Method

This study, a survey that is a component of quantitative research, seeks to ascertain a population's opinions, beliefs, or traits [10]. The study was carried out at a college in Surabaya, Indonesia. There were 400 hybrid class pupils in total. In this study, convenience sampling was used.

This study employed a questionnaire method for data collecting, asking participants to select one of several lists of statements from which they might choose an alternate response. The respondents' emotional independence was assessed using the questionnaires. Based on Gadzella's hypothesis, the Likert scale was developed to gauge academic stress (2012). Positive comments (f) and negative statements (n) made up this scale's two categories (uf).

Content validity, which refers to the assessment of the test's content with logical analysis and the degree to which the test items represent the constituent parts in the overall scope of the object to be tested, was used in this study. Additionally, it refers to how thoroughly the behaviorally reflective elements will be evaluated. If an item's item score is more than or equal to 0.3, the thing is valid for this study [11]. Thirty-seven questionnaire statements were found legitimate and used to retrieve data based on the trial's outcomes on a scale of 30 respondents.

Sugiyono [12] claims that the similarity of data collected at various times demonstrates reliability. From 0 to 1.00 is the dependability coefficient range. So, if the dependability result is close to 1.00, the instrument is considered very dependable [11]. The alpha Cronbach reliability value for the academic stress scale in this study was 0.879. To categorize academic stress into three levels—high, moderate, and low—the SPSS 25.0 for Windows software program employed descriptive statistics using percentages of subjects (average and standard deviations).

To advance research, identify novel technologies, and create innovations for the benefit of humanity, researchers are committed to the quest for scientific knowledge [13]. The researcher is responsible for following the predetermined research methodology. All accessible justification and proof-of-results procedures are employed throughout the investigation, carried out according to a more or less scientific standardized method [14].

Table 1. Descriptive Statistical Test Results

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St. Deviation</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
<i>Stress Akademik</i>	304	117.41	19.655	40	178

Table 2. Test Results of Each Aspect

Aspects	Mean
Academic Stressors	51.8
Reaction to stress	25.4

Table 3. Categorization of Academic Stress

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	34	11.2%
Moderate	235	77.3%
High	35	11.5%
Total	304	100%

3 Result and Discussion

This study intends to investigate how students who are enrolled in hybrid learning courses perceive their academic stress. The maximum rating on the scale of academic focus is 178, according to Table 1. The result with the lowest score is 40. According to the descriptive statistical analysis findings, the standard deviation was 19.655, and the mean value was 117.41.

The academic stressor is the factor that has the most impact on the academic stress of students who participate in hybrid lectures, according to the average score from the elements mentioned above. Table 2 shows that the average number of academic stressors was 51.8. The average stress response factor was 25.4, whereas. The second factor that affects the academic stress of students who attend hybrid learning lectures, in contrast, is the element of the stress reaction.

According to Table 3, 77.3% of the students reported experiencing moderate stress. There is, however, a slight difference between the high and low levels of academic stress among students, with the high level being 11.5% and the low level being 11.2%.

That table shows that 88.88% and 16.12% of female and male pupils, respectively, are at a moderate level. At this level, female students experience more academic stress (11.76%) than male students (10.20%). One of the elements that can lead to stress is gender. According to a 2015 study by Dhull and Kumari, female students experience

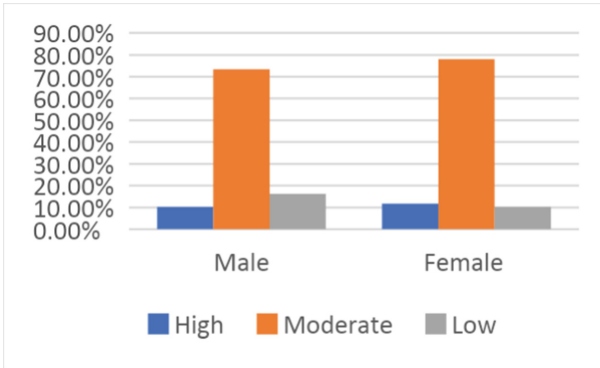


Fig. 1. Student Academic Stress Outcomes By Gender

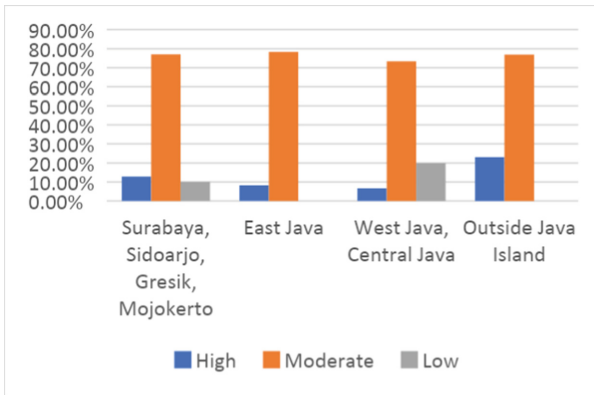


Fig. 2. Student Academic Stress Outcomes Based on Residency

more academic stress than male students (Fig. 1). Additionally, students' risk of illness can rise with moderate academic pressure that is considerable and chronic [15].

According to Fig. 2, most students who do not reside on Java Island experience moderate academic stress (76.92%), while only 23.08% of students experience high-stress levels.

Since the hybrid has offered online learning for the last two years with no requirement to attend on-site, students will need to reconsider the cost of living close to the university. Here, stress is predicated on one's capacity for thought and readiness to meet problems [16]. Additionally, academic pressure develops when demands and expectations rise, such as those from peers, parents, or professors, and when those demands and expectations don't align with each person's ability [17].

The financial industry is not spared from the pandemic's impact on all sectors of life, as was previously stated. The working class is frequently reported as getting laid off due to tourists and declining purchasing power [18]. This is online schooling, which necessitates a sizable quantity of internet capacity. As a result, the author adds the

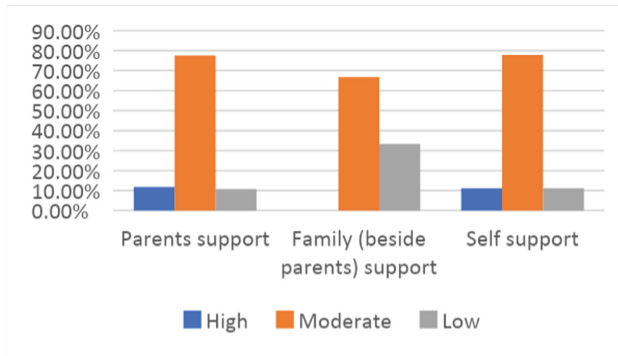


Fig. 3. Student Academic Stress Outcomes Based on Financial Support Matters

financial component to the thing being measured. This aspect is assessed descriptively so that the person can discuss any financial difficulties they may have encountered.

Figure 3 reveals that the vast majority of students, especially those supported by parents (77.51%) and those supported by family, that is, sources other than parents (66.7%), have moderate levels of stress. However, just 11.11% of self-financing students fall under severe pressure.

Here, adopting one's perspective might help students avoid stress because, in addition to dealing with financial issues, they also have to meet academic requirements. Additionally, students can prevent academic stress by adopting a positive outlook [19].

Humanity has been forced to adapt and alter by Covid-19. This includes utilizing a novel educational approach. In the past, learning was primarily accomplished through direct communication and taking notes in books. However, an online system has been put in place since the outbreak. As a result, internet usage is restricted, participation is limited, and students and teachers are compelled to study technology more attentively. Due to the internet network, astronomically high quota prices, and the lack of touch that occurs during online learning, this approach is being evaluated [20].

A new policy on education in Indonesia has also been implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia due to the drop in Covid-19 pandemic cases. As stated in Circular Letter No. 4 of 2021, released by the Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia, this new policy transforms the learning technique from online to hybrid learning, or a blend of face-to-face and online learning. Students will now need to adapt to new technology and teaching strategies. They also need to do their assignments to graduate on time and earn a decent grades. Thus, it causes academic stress among students. Academic focus is the mental tension people experience due to their displeasure with academic failure or their ignorance of the likelihood of such failure [21].

Gadzella[7] defines academic stress as how people perceive and respond to academic stress. Additionally, according to Barseli and Ifdil, academic stress is a condition in which people view academic expectations as troublesome because they cannot handle them. Academic stress develops when demands and expectations arise, whether from peers, instructors, or parents. Because these demands and expectations don't match individual

talents, tension grows [17]. Stress is based on one's capacity for thought and readiness to face difficulties and find solutions [16].

During the Covid-19 pandemic, hybrid learning students had more academic stress. Lack of readiness, resources owned, the environment, a lack of facilities and infrastructure, a lack of understanding of the subject matter, and a lack of constructive activities that may be carried out during a pandemic are some variables that raise students' stress levels in hybrid learning [22]. Furthermore, according to Chiang [23], several stressors for teenagers are connected to the school setting, such as having too many duties to complete, receiving subpar grades, preparing for exams, not being interested in the courses, and receiving discipline from teachers.

According to a 2009 study by Agolla and Ongori, academic stress is caused by various factors, including the number of work students have to do. This study shows that most students (77.3%) reported moderate academic stress in the fourth semester when the workload increased. Teachers should pay greater attention to this issue because mild stress can raise the risk of illnesses like headaches or sleep disruptions that make students angry, lack focus, and work on incomplete tasks [24].

This study examines the academic constraints and stress reactions of 400 students in Surabaya. The study's flaw, the Gadzela scale [7], can be improved in future research with a scale better suited to the conditions of the Covid-19 epidemic.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, there are two components to academic stress: stress reactions and academic stressors. For students participating in hybrid learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, academic stressors significantly impact academic focus more than their stress reaction. In this study, it was discovered that the financial component influenced students' stress levels. In conclusion, it can be claimed that students who engage in hybrid learning have moderate academic stress.

Compared to online learning, hybrid learning has yet to be thoroughly studied. Additionally, the various variables can be regarded as relevant for further study. It is also anticipated that students will be able to manage their tasks and maintain a positive outlook to reduce academic stress by understanding the image based on this study. Because of this, they are carrying out this task can advance our understanding of academic stress in hybrid learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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