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Analysis of Factors Influencing Academic Achievement of Working Students

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Abstract

This study addresses the increasing prevalence of burnout among working university students, a condition that threatens both their psychological well-being and academic success. Although previous research has explored the link between burnout, emotional intelligence, and performance, limited evidence exists in the context of higher education students who balance dual roles in developing countries. The present study aims to analyze the effect of burnout on the academic performance of working students, with emotional intelligence positioned as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach with an explanatory design was employed, involving 300 undergraduate students from private universities in North Sumatra, Indonesia, who simultaneously study and work. Data were collected using validated instruments and analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling with the Partial Least Squares method. The findings reveal that burnout significantly and negatively affects both emotional intelligence ($\beta = -0.670$, $p < 0.001$) and academic performance ($\beta = -0.268$, $p < 0.001$). Emotional intelligence exerts a positive effect on academic performance ($\beta = 0.188$, $p = 0.007$) and significantly mediates the relationship between burnout and performance ($\beta = -0.126$, $p = 0.008$). These results confirm the protective role of emotional intelligence in reducing the detrimental effects of burnout and highlight its importance in sustaining students' academic achievement. The study contributes to theoretical advancement in burnout and emotional intelligence research while offering practical implications for higher education institutions to develop emotional regulation programs that support the resilience of working students.

INTRODUCTION

Working while studying has become an increasingly common phenomenon in many countries, including Indonesia. The Student Academic Experience Survey HEPI & Advance HE (2023) reported a significant increase in the proportion of students who work, rising from 45 percent to 55 percent within a single year (Neves & Stephenson, 2023) In Indonesia, data from Statistics Indonesia (2024) indicate that of the 147 million people of working age, approximately 11.7 million hold higher education degrees, with an estimated 3 to 4 million of them being active university students who are also employed (BPS, 2024).

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This phenomenon suggests that nearly 30 percent of Indonesian students carry dual roles as learners and workers, creating a complex and demanding academic environment.

The decision to work while studying is often driven by economic needs and the desire for financial independence. Pratama & Kalbarini, (2023) noted that many students, particularly those who migrate for education, must cover their tuition fees and living expenses independently. While working provides economic benefits and practical experience, it also imposes additional pressure, as students must simultaneously allocate time, energy, and attention to both academic and professional responsibilities. Such imbalance may lead to physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion, a condition that psychology defines as burnout.

Burnout is a psychological syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal efficacy (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The prevalence of burnout among students continues to increase globally. A meta analysis conducted by Kaggwa et al., (2021) across 55 international studies found that the prevalence of student burnout reached 12.1 percent, with the highest rate recorded in Asia at 30.2 percent. In Indonesia, Zahra et al., (2024) reported that 91.3 percent of part time working students experienced high levels of burnout, while Aini & Sulaiman (2024) found that 56.25 percent of final year working students experienced moderate burnout. Burnout not only affects mental health but is also negatively associated with academic performance (Ahmed & Shah, 2019; Madigan & Curran, 2021).

Students who experience burnout often exhibit decreased concentration, low learning motivation, academic anxiety, and difficulty completing coursework (Kastaman & Coralia, 2022). These symptoms directly affect academic outcomes, including lower grade point averages, academic delays, and even decisions to withdraw from university. Burnout can therefore be regarded as a significant risk factor that hinders students' academic success, particularly for those balancing dual roles as workers and learners. To cope with burnout, self regulation through emotional intelligence becomes crucial. (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) define emotional intelligence (EI) as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others in a constructive manner. Empirical studies show that EI plays a role in reducing burnout (Almeneessier & Azer, 2023; Han et al., 2022) and enhancing students' adaptive capacities in stressful academic situations (Karim & Purba, 2021). Thus, EI is viewed as a protective factor that strengthens students' psychological resilience in managing the simultaneous demands of study and work.

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between burnout and academic performance, most have been conducted among secondary school students or full time university students without additional work responsibilities. Molero Jurado et al., (2021), for example, found that EI mediates the relationship between burnout and academic performance. However, their study was conducted in Spain with high school students, who face different social and structural pressures compared to working university students in Indonesia. Some studies have also positioned academic performance as a predictor of burnout, whereas in reality burnout is more likely to emerge as a precursor that influences academic performance among working students. This highlights a research gap in understanding the explicit mediating role of EI in the context of higher education students who are actively employed in developing countries.

To support the analysis, this study proposes a conceptual framework that illustrates the relationships among burnout, emotional intelligence, and academic performance. This framework serves as the basis for hypothesis development, as presented in figure 1.

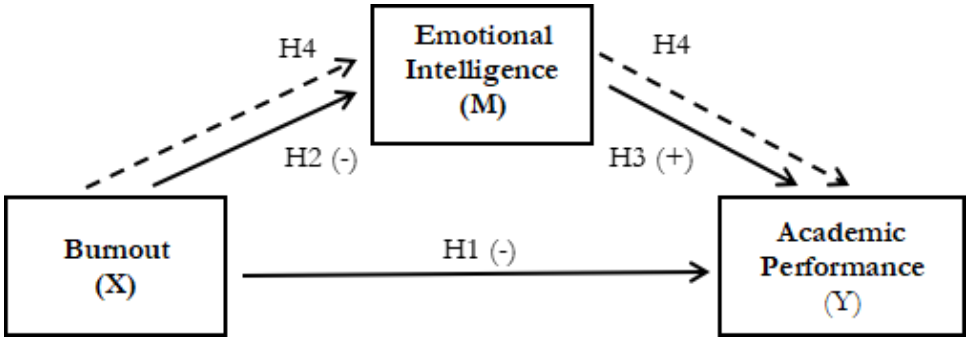

Fig 1. Conceptual framework

H1: Burnout (X) has a negative effect on academic performance (Y)

H2: Burnout (X) has a negative effect on emotional intelligence (M)

H3: Emotional intelligence (M) has a positive effect on academic performance (Y)

H4: Emotional intelligence (M) mediates the negative effect of burnout (X) on academic performance (Y)

H1 Burnout (X) negatively affects academic performance (Y)

Burnout is a psychological syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced self efficacy caused by chronic stress (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). In the context of working students, the dual demands of study and employment increase the risk of burnout, as shown by (Zahra et al., 2024), who reported that the majority of part time students experienced high levels of burnout. Theoretically, from a cognitive behavioral perspective, burnout erodes cognitive and motivational capacities, whereby exhaustion reduces learning energy, cynicism diminishes academic interest, and low self efficacy weakens confidence in accomplishing tasks (Gross, 2015). As a result, executive functions such as concentration, time management, and decision making are disrupted, leading to decreased academic achievement. Empirical findings support this view. A meta analysis by Madigan & Curran, (2021) confirmed that burnout contributes to lower grade point averages and increases the risk of dropout, while Mohtar et al., (2022) found that students with moderate to high levels of burnout tend to experience delays in completing their studies. Thus, burnout can be regarded as a strong predictor of the decline in students' academic performance.

H2: Burnout (X) has a negative effect on emotional intelligence (M)

Burnout has the potential to weaken emotional intelligence (EI) because the chronic stress associated with it depletes individuals' psychological resources. According to the Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018), emotional exhaustion and prolonged pressure drain the emotional and cognitive energy required for self awareness and self regulation, which are fundamental aspects of EI. Empirical evidence indicates that students experiencing high levels of burnout show reduced emotional regulation, empathy, and social perspective taking (Cairns et al., 2024; Lewczuk et al., 2022). Similar findings have been reported in Indonesia, where burnout was found to be negatively correlated with EI among students, thereby increasing their vulnerability to interpersonal conflict and diminishing psychological well being (Isbadi & Al-Ahsani, 2025; Putri et al., 2023). Thus, burnout can be

viewed as a factor that undermines students' emotional capacity to cope with academic and social pressures, ultimately weakening their emotional intelligence.

H3: Emotional intelligence (M) has a positive effect on academic performance (Y)

Emotional intelligence (EI) is understood as an individual's capacity to recognize, understand, and manage emotions effectively, thereby enabling adaptive behavior in both academic and social contexts (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). As a non cognitive factor, EI plays an important role in supporting self regulation, intrinsic motivation, and adaptability to academic pressure. Based on the theories of self regulated learning and academic resilience, students with higher EI are more capable of managing time, sustaining motivation, and recovering from failure without significant declines in performance (Halimi et al., 2021). Empirical evidence reinforces this perspective. A meta analysis by (MacCann et al., 2020) demonstrated a positive relationship between EI, grade point average, and academic engagement. Studies in Indonesia have yielded consistent findings, showing that students with higher EI display greater discipline, active participation, and improved academic achievement (Nindyati, 2020). Thus, EI can be regarded as an important predictor of enhanced academic performance, particularly in navigating complex academic demands.

H4: Emotional intelligence (M) mediates the negative effect of burnout (X) on academic performance (Y)

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and low self efficacy, has been shown to hinder the academic performance of working students. However, not all individuals respond to chronic stress in the same way, as emotional intelligence (EI) can function as a psychological resource that protects against the effects of burnout. Within the Job Demands Resources (JD R) framework, EI is considered a personal resource that enhances students' capacity to manage academic demands (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Students with high EI are able to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions adaptively, thereby reducing their vulnerability to the negative effects of stress (Mayer et al., 1997). Research has demonstrated that EI mediates the relationship between stress, burnout, and academic outcomes, acting as a buffer that weakens the adverse effects of burnout (Zhang & Fah, 2024). Conceptually, this is also consistent with the Transactional Stress and Coping Model (Richard & Susan, 1984), which emphasizes that individual responses to stress are strongly influenced by cognitive appraisal and coping capacity. Therefore, EI can be viewed as a psychological mechanism that maintains emotional stability and supports academic performance even under dual pressures, ultimately contributing to employability and the quality of the future workforce.

This study focuses on undergraduate students, both in regular and executive programs, who simultaneously study and work. This population is growing yet remains underexplored in the academic literature. The study also examines the mediating role of EI in the relationship between burnout and academic performance, an approach that has been relatively overlooked in higher education research within developing country contexts. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the impact of burnout on the academic performance of working students, with EI as an intervening variable. In doing so, the study not only advances theoretical understanding of emotion based coping mechanisms but also provides empirical foundations for higher education intervention strategies to support working students. Moreover, it contributes to strengthening human resource development that is adaptive and capable of

driving economic progress.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to explain the causal relationships among burnout (independent variable), emotional intelligence (mediating variable), and academic performance (dependent variable) in working students. A cross sectional approach was applied to collect data at a single point in time, while mediation analysis was conducted to examine the role of emotional intelligence in influencing the relationship between burnout and academic performance. The choice of this design was based on the objective of testing causal hypotheses formulated from the literature review (Asril et al., 2023; Damri et al., 2017; Engkizar et al., 2018, 2023, 2025; Oktavia et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2018).

The study population consisted of all active undergraduate students, both regular and executive program participants, who were simultaneously studying and working at private universities in North Sumatra during the 2024/2025 academic year. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that respondents met the inclusion criteria: being active students in at least the third semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, having permanent or part time employment including entrepreneurial activities, and being willing to complete the questionnaire in full. Based on the "10 times rule" in PLS SEM, which states that the minimum sample size is determined by multiplying ten times the number of indicators analyzed (Barclay et al., 1995; Hair et al., 2021), the 24 indicators used in this study required a minimum of 240 respondents. To improve the reliability of the estimates and to anticipate missing data, the study targeted approximately 300 respondents.

This study involved 300 undergraduate students who were simultaneously studying and working. The majority of respondents were female (68%) and aged 20–24 years, with 22 years being the most common age (27%). Most participants came from the 2021 and 2022 cohorts, while the rest were distributed across earlier and later intakes. Academically, respondents represented various study programs, with a small proportion from Management, Law, and Business Management, and the majority (85%) from other disciplines. In terms of employment, most students were engaged in service-based and flexible jobs, including teaching, waitstaff, barista, and small-scale entrepreneurial activities. Despite carrying dual roles, most students maintained satisfactory academic achievement, with 66% having a GPA between 3.00–3.79, while only 6% had a GPA below 2.50.

Data collection was conducted through online questionnaires using Google Forms as well as limited face to face distribution for respondents with restricted internet access. Prior to the main survey, a pilot test was carried out with 30 respondents to ensure clarity of items and the reliability of the instruments. Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method, facilitated by SmartPLS version 4.0.9.9. The analysis was conducted in two stages, namely the outer model to assess construct validity and reliability, and the inner model to evaluate the relationships among latent variables through R^2 values and hypothesis testing. Model fit was also assessed to ensure that the measurement model was consistent with the empirical data. This assessment employed several model fit indices, including the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), and Chi square value. Hypotheses were

tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, applying the criteria of t statistic > 1.96 and p value < 0.05.

The operationalization of variables was developed to explain the operational definitions, dimensions, indicators, measurement scales, and theoretical sources. Details of the operationalization of variables are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Operational variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Dimensions	Scale	Source
Burnout (X)	A psychological condition encompassing emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic tasks, and the level of self-efficacy in dealing with the demands of studying while working, measured using the short version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory General Survey (MBI-GS9).	Emotional Exhaustion, Cynicism, Professional Efficacy	Likert 1-5	Maslach & Jackson (1981)
Emotional Intelligence (M)	The ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize one's own emotions as well as those of others effectively in academic and work contexts, measured using the Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 (BEIS-10).	Self-Emotional Appraisal, Others' Emotional Appraisal, Self-Emotional Regulation, Others' Emotional Regulation, Use of Emotion	Likert 1-5	Salovey & Mayer (1990)
Academic Performance (Y)	The level of student achievement reflected in learning behavior and academic performance (latest GPA).	Academic Activities, Academic Achievement	Likert 1-5	(Fredricks *et al.,* 2004; Pascarella & Terenzin, 2005; Gilar-Corbi *et al.,* 2020)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed through factor loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). An indicator is considered valid if its factor loading exceeds 0.70, while a construct is deemed valid when the AVE value is greater than 0.50. The results of the factor loadings and AVE for each construct in this study are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Results of Convergent Validity Testing

Variable	Indicator	Factor Loading	AVE	Remarks
Burnout (X)	I feel emotionally exhausted due to academic and work demands	0.890	0.809	Valid
	I feel emotionally drained after completing academic and work activities	0.910		Valid
	I often feel physically and mentally fatigued at the end of the day	0.906		Valid
	I feel less enthusiastic about attending lectures	0.902		Valid
	Academic tasks no longer motivate me	0.890		Valid
	The courses I am taking provide little meaningful value	0.888		Valid
	I feel less capable of completing academic tasks effectively	0.900		Valid
	My productivity in academic activities has declined	0.897		Valid
	The quality of my academic work has decreased	0.914		Valid
Emotional Intelligence (M)	I am aware of the reasons behind my emotional changes when facing academic and work demands	0.874	0.775	Valid
	I can easily recognize my emotions while working and studying	0.871		Valid
	I can understand the feelings of colleagues or classmates through their tone of voice	0.862		Valid
	I can identify the emotions of colleagues or classmates from facial expressions	0.889		Valid

	I engage in activities that make me feel happy amidst academic and work pressures	0.889		Valid
	I can control my emotions when experiencing pressure from work or academic tasks	0.885		Valid
	I can organize activities that my colleagues or classmates enjoy	0.862		Valid
Variable	**Indicator**	**Factor Loading**	**AVE**	**Remarks**
	I help colleagues or classmates feel better when they are under pressure	0.890		Valid
	When in a positive mood, I am able to generate new ideas for work or study	0.880		Valid
	I utilize positive moods to keep striving despite challenges in work or study	0.897		Valid
Academic Performance (Y)	I submit assignments on time according to deadlines	0.834		Valid
	I understand lecture materials well	0.836		Valid
	I actively ask and answer questions in class	0.876		Valid
	I am able to manage study time effectively	0.908		Valid
	I have strong motivation to achieve the best academic performance	0.910		Valid

The results of the convergent validity test show that all indicators of burnout, emotional intelligence, and academic performance have loading factor values greater than 0.70, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of 0.809, 0.775, and 0.763, respectively. According to the criteria that a construct is considered valid if the AVE value is greater than 0.50, it can be concluded that all indicators in this study are valid.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). A construct is considered valid if the HTMT value is less than 0.90, which indicates that each construct is clearly distinct and that there are no multicollinearity issues. The results of the HTMT analysis in this study are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Results of Discriminant Validity Testing

Variable	Burnout	Emotional Intelligence	Academic Performance	Remarks
Burnout	-	0.689	0.410	Valid
Emotional Intelligence	0.689	-	0.388	Valid

Academic Performance	0.410	0.388	-	Valid

All HTMT values are below the threshold of 0.90, indicating that the constructs of burnout, emotional intelligence, and academic performance fulfill the requirements of discriminant validity.

Reliability

Reliability testing was conducted using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha of the indicator blocks measuring each construct. A construct is considered reliable when the composite reliability value exceeds 0.70 and Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.70.

Table 4. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Cut-off	Remark
Burnout	0.971	0.975	0.700	Reliable
Emotional Intelligence	0.968	0.972	0.700	Reliable
Academic Performance	0.922	0.941	0.700	Reliable

Based on the results above, all constructs demonstrated Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that each construct possesses strong internal reliability and can be categorized as reliable in measuring its respective dimensions. Consequently, the analysis can proceed to the next stage, namely the testing of the structural model (inner model).

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Structural model testing was conducted to evaluate the strength of relationships among the latent constructs in this study. This stage is important because once the measurement model (outer model) has been confirmed as valid and reliable, it is necessary to ensure that the relationships among the latent variables align with the proposed theoretical framework. Thus, the results of the inner model testing provide a robust basis for drawing conclusions regarding the interrelationships among the constructs under investigation.

R-Square

The R-Square value represents the coefficient of determination for the endogenous constructs. In general, an R-Square value of 0.67 indicates a strong model, 0.33 indicates a moderate model, and 0.19 indicates a weak model.

Table 5. R-Square Results

Variable	R-Square	Category
Emotional Intelligence	0.449	Moderate
Academic Performance	0.175	Weak

Based on Table 7, the R-Square values indicate that emotional intelligence can be explained by the model at 0.449 (moderate), while academic performance is explained at 0.175 (weak). The relatively low R^2 for academic performance suggests that the relationship between burnout, emotional intelligence, and academic performance represents only one explanatory mechanism. This finding highlights the complexity of factors influencing academic performance and opens opportunities for future studies to explore additional variables that may play a role, particularly within the specific context of working students in Indonesia.

Model Fit Test

After examining the contribution of independent variables to the dependent variable through the R-Square values, the next step is to evaluate the Goodness of Fit (GOF). A model is considered fit if it meets the general criteria, such as an SRMR value less than 0.08 and an NFI value greater than 0.90. The results of the GOF test are presented in the following table:

Table 6. Model Fit Test

Model Fit	Estimated Value	Cut-off	Result
SRMR	0.041	< 0.08	**Fit**
d_ULS	0.509	The smaller, the better	**Fit**
d_G	0.620	The smaller, the better	**Fit**
Chi-square	1001.341	The smaller, the better	**Fit**
NFI	0.882	≥ 0.90	**No fit**

The results of the model fit test indicate that SRMR, d_ULS, d_G, and Chi-square values meet the criteria for model fit, while the NFI value (0.882) does not reach the established cut-off. Overall, the model can be considered adequate and acceptable, although one indicator has not achieved an optimal level of fit.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing was carried out using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS to evaluate the significance of the relationships among variables. The t-statistic values were compared against the critical t-value of 1.96 at the 5% significance level. A hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistic exceeds 1.96. The results of the bootstrapping analysis are presented in the following figure:

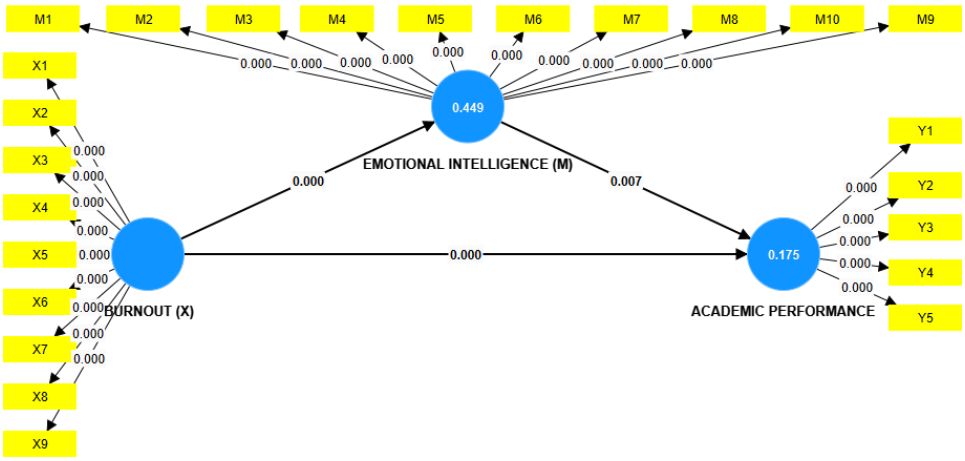

Fig 2. Bootstrapping Results

To clarify these results, a summary of the hypothesis testing is presented in table 7 as follows:

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing

Variable Relationship	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Result
Direct Effect				
Burnout -> Academic Performance	-0.268	4.412	0.000	Significant
Burnout -> Emotional Intelligence	-0.670	16.601	0.000	Significant
Emotional	0.188	2.482	0.007	Significant

Intelligence Academic Performance	->				
Indirect Effect					
Burnout Emotional Intelligence Academic Performance	-> ->	-0.126	2.429	0.008	Significant

The Impact of Burnout on Academic Performance

The results of this study indicate that burnout has a significant negative effect on the academic performance of working students in North Sumatra, with a coefficient of –0.268 and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. Higher levels of burnout lead to lower academic achievement, affecting both GPA and qualitative aspects such as class engagement and learning motivation. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1), which posits that burnout negatively affects academic performance, is supported.

These findings are consistent with the meta analysis by Madigan & Curran, (2021), which revealed that burnout significantly contributes to GPA decline and increases the risk of dropout across various higher education contexts. The results also align with the study by Ahmed & Shah, (2019), which found that students with high levels of burnout tend to experience concentration difficulties and reduced academic motivation. This study extends prior evidence by focusing on working students in Indonesia, a population that has been relatively underexamined. The dual burden of work and study appears to amplify the effects of burnout compared to regular students who focus solely on academics.

Theoretically, these results can be explained through the burnout model developed by Maslach & Jackson, (1981), which emphasizes three core dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal efficacy. These dimensions directly undermine students' capacity to mobilize cognitive resources for academic activities. For instance, emotional exhaustion diminishes mental energy for learning, cynicism erodes interest in courses, and low self efficacy weakens confidence in completing academic tasks effectively. Thus, this study reinforces the position of burnout theory as a key framework for explaining academic failure due to chronic stress.

Contextual relevance is particularly strong for working students in North Sumatra. Although most respondents have good GPAs, burnout significantly reduces academic quality, affecting class engagement and learning consistency. More than 90% of part-time working students in Indonesia experience high burnout (Zahra et al., 2024), which is exacerbated locally by factors such as the predominance of migrant students financing their education independently and limited access to academic support. These findings highlight that burnout is both a global and a local issue affecting academic success.

The Impact of Burnout on Emotional Intelligence

The results of this study confirm that burnout has a significant negative effect on the emotional intelligence of working students in North Sumatra, with a coefficient of –0.670 and a significance level of 0.000. This finding indicates that the higher the level of burnout experienced by students, the lower their ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions constructively. This aligns with the second hypothesis proposed in the study, suggesting that burnout erodes the emotional foundation crucial for coping

with dual pressures as both students and workers.

Most studies indicate that burnout reduces emotional intelligence (EI), including emotional regulation, self-awareness, and self-regulation (Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013), although some contexts show variable effects on empathy (Cairns et al., 2024). This overall pattern strengthens the empirical evidence for the negative impact of burnout on EI. Theoretically, these results can be explained through the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory developed by (Hobfoll et al., 2018). This theory posits that chronic stress depletes internal resources, including emotional and cognitive energy, ultimately reducing the capacity for emotional regulation. Within this framework, burnout can be seen as a condition of psychological resource depletion that impedes students' ability to maintain emotional stability. The findings of this study reinforce the relevance of COR theory in understanding the dynamics of burnout among working students and provide new empirical evidence from Indonesia, particularly among student workers, a group previously underrepresented in scholarly research.

The connection between these findings and the realities of working students in North Sumatra is further illustrated by the characteristics of the respondents. Most students work due to economic needs and the pursuit of financial independence. Economic pressures combined with academic demands make burnout likely, which in turn reduces EI and increases role conflict, stress vulnerability, and weaker social relationships. Therefore, the results of this study not only reflect individual phenomena but also highlight the structural realities faced by working students in this region.

The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Performance

The results of this study indicate that emotional intelligence (EI) has a positive and significant effect on the academic performance of working students in North Sumatra (coefficient = 0.188, p = 0.007), confirming the third hypothesis (H3). Students with high EI are able to maintain learning motivation, regulate emotions under pressure, and sustain academic quality despite the dual demands of study and work.

These findings are consistent with global literature emphasizing the positive relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement. A meta-analysis involving over 42,000 participants across multiple countries MacCann et al., (2020) reported a significant positive correlation between EI and learning outcomes. Other studies have also found that students with high EI are better able to manage their study time and recover from academic setbacks (Halimi et al., 2021). In Indonesia, research by Nindyati, (2020) showed that students with higher EI are more disciplined in completing assignments and more actively engaged in class discussions, resulting in higher GPAs. Consistent with these global and national findings, working students in North Sumatra with high EI are able to maintain academic consistency despite additional work burdens, highlighting the crucial role of EI in a population that has been relatively underexamined.

The positive relationship between EI and academic performance can be explained through the model proposed by Mayer, (2004), which emphasizes four branches of EI: emotion perception, emotion facilitation, emotion understanding, and emotion management. Working students with high EI are able to use positive emotions to motivate themselves, regulate negative emotions when under pressure, and maintain productive social relationships with lecturers and colleagues. This is further supported by the self regulated learning framework developed by Zimmerman, (2002), where emotion management is a key foundation for self management and the achievement of

academic goals. These findings confirm the theoretical significance of EI in explaining student academic success.

For working students in North Sumatra, emotional intelligence appears to be a critical capability. Students in this region must divide their time between study and work, often driven by economic necessity. The ability to maintain emotional stability serves as a key differentiator between students who continue to excel and those who fall behind. Emotion regulation helps students cope with fatigue, sustain learning motivation despite work exhaustion, and maintain healthy social relationships on campus. Therefore, these findings underscore EI as an adaptive mechanism that enables working students to survive and thrive academically.

Emotional Intelligence as a Mediator between Burnout and Academic Performance

The results of this study indicate that emotional intelligence (EI) significantly mediates the relationship between burnout and the academic performance of working students in North Sumatra (mediation coefficient = –0.126, $p < 0.05$). This means that although burnout negatively affects academic performance, students with high EI are able to maintain their academic achievements, supporting the fourth hypothesis (H4). These findings highlight that enhancing EI is crucial not only for academic success but also for developing resilient and productive human capital, which is relevant for human resource development in developing countries.

This study highlights important differences compared to previous research in developed countries. While Molero Jurado et al., (2021), found that EI mediates the relationship between burnout and academic performance among high school students in Spain, with academic and social pressures being dominant, the present study focuses on working students in North Sumatra, Indonesia, who face economic pressures, limited access to education, and dual roles as students and workers. These contextual differences underscore the novelty of this research, showing that in a developing country setting, EI functions as a core personal resource supporting academic resilience.

Theoretically, these findings can be explained through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), in which EI serves as a personal resource that enables students not only to endure burnout but also to transform stress into adaptive coping strategies. This perspective is reinforced by Tambunan et al., (2022), who emphasize that human development relies on both material and psychological-spiritual resources that support mental resilience.

In the context of working students in North Sumatra, the mediating role of EI is particularly crucial given economic burdens, long working hours, and high academic demands. Students with high EI are able to convert pressure into positive behaviors, such as maintaining learning motivation, managing time effectively, and building healthy relationships, whereas students with low EI tend to experience drastic declines in academic performance. Therefore, this study demonstrates that EI is not merely a psychological variable but an adaptive asset essential for the success of working students.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that burnout significantly reduces emotional intelligence and academic performance, while emotional intelligence serves as an important mediator that helps maintain academic outcomes. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on working students in North Sumatra, Indonesia, a group facing dual academic and economic pressures and rarely studied

before. The findings extend the understanding of the Job Demands and Resources framework by highlighting the role of emotional intelligence as a critical personal resource in the context of a developing country. Practically, this study encourages higher education institutions to integrate stress management and emotional regulation programs to strengthen resilience and sustain the academic success of working students.

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