

# THE WAR IN THE SELF: THE INFLUENCE OF IMPOSTOR SYNDROME AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE ON ACADEMIC ANXIETY

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**Abstract.** This study aims to determine the influence of Impostor Syndrome tendency and academic resilience on academic anxiety. The research method used is quantitative. The subjects of this study are 55 undergraduate students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University, Samarinda who are pursuing strata 1 with purposive sampling data collection techniques. The data analysis technique used is multiple linear regression. The collected data was analyzed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0 for windows program. The results showed that (1) there was a significant influence of Impostor Syndrome and academic resilience on academic anxiety with a value of  $F_{\text{Count}} = 16.133 > F_{\text{Table}} = 3.18$  and  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$  and an influence contribution of 38.3%; (2) there was no significant effect of Impostor Syndrome on academic anxiety with a value of beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) = 0.162,  $t_{\text{count}} = 1.152$ , and  $p = 0.225$  ( $p < 0.05$ ); (3) There was a significant effect of academic resilience on academic anxiety with a value of beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) = -0.503,  $t_{\text{count}} = 3.564$ , and  $p = 0.002$  ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Keywords:** academic anxiety; impostor syndrome; academic resilience

## I. INTRODUCTION

Academic anxiety is gaining increasing attention among students, especially with the increasing academic demands faced in higher education environments. According to the American Psychological Association (2021), anxiety is characterized by feelings of fear and physical symptoms such as muscle tension, rapid breathing patterns, and increased heart rate. Students, who are defined as someone who is studying at a university and is usually in their late teens (Faradillah & Amriana, 2020), often experience the negative impact of this anxiety, which can interfere with the learning process, decrease memory, and affect overall academic results (Fatimah et al., 2021). In this context, academic anxiety not only hinders students from completing academic tasks, but can also lead to a decrease in their motivation and confidence.

The phenomenon of Impostor Syndrome, in which individuals doubt their skills and achievements, and feel that the success achieved is not entirely due to competence, but rather due to the luck factor (Feenstra, 2020; Kuppasanny, 2022), can exacerbate this anxiety. This condition often creates a negative cycle, where students with Impostor Syndrome feel trapped in a feeling of helplessness and it is increasingly difficult to achieve their academic goals. On the other hand, academic resilience, which is defined as an individual's ability to survive and adapt amid difficulties that interfere with the educational process (Retnowati & Affandi, 2018), serves as a protective factor. This resilience is very important in helping students overcome various pressures that arise, both from the academic and social environment.

Previous research conducted by Hasanah et al. (2020) shows that the anxiety experienced by individuals can have a significant effect on their learning outcomes. In addition, Vrichasti et al. (2020) reported that 28% of students experience severe anxiety, which shows a fairly high prevalence in the student population. However, although there are studies that explain these factors, many of them focus on one aspect without integrating other relevant components. For example, Zulaifi (2022) highlights that academic anxiety often arises from the perception of unreal threats, but there has been no research that comprehensively explores the interaction between academic anxiety, Impostor Syndrome, and academic resilience simultaneously. Thus, this study aims to fill in the gap, provide new insights, and offer a more holistic understanding of the relationship between these three variables.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of Impostor Syndrome and academic resilience on academic anxiety in Strata 1 students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University. This study aims to complement the existing literature with empirical data on the contribution of these two factors to anxiety, considering that many previous studies have focused on only one aspect. By identifying the relationship between academic anxiety, Impostor Syndrome, and academic resilience, this study is expected to provide new insights into the psychological dynamics of students and fill the gaps in existing studies. The results of this study are expected to show how academic resilience functions as a protective factor and

provide empirical evidence to support the development of more effective support strategies for students.

This study wanted to test the hypothesis of whether there is a significant relationship between Impostor Syndrome tendency and academic resilience to the level of academic anxiety in students. By measuring these variables, the study will prove that academic resilience can reduce the negative impact of Impostor Syndrome on anxiety, which is important for developing support strategies for students.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is a quantitative method, with a bound variable in the form of academic anxiety and an independent variable, namely Impostor Syndrome. This study aims to understand the relationship between the two variables systematically and measurably.

The research subjects consisted of 55 students of the Faculty of Economics and Business. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling, where sampling is carried out with predetermined considerations. To determine the sample, this study uses purposive sampling, which is a sample determination technique based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2017).

The data collection method used is a measurement tool with a Likert type scale. The three research measuring tools applied are the academic anxiety scale, the Impostor Syndrome scale, and the academic resilience scale. This research will apply test techniques to 55 subjects of Strata 1 students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University, Samarinda.

For data analysis, multiple linear regression analysis was used to process the research data. This method aims to find out how the influence and predictive ability of the two independent variables of Impostor Syndrome and academic resilience on the dependent variable, namely academic anxiety. Kurniawan and Yuniarto (2016) stated that in regression analysis, it is necessary to have a defined variable and a determinant variable, where there is a dependence between the independent variable and the dependent variable that affects each other.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted on students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University who are pursuing strata 1, the results of the major hypothesis test in this study were accepted, namely there is an influence of Impostor Syndrome and academic resilience on academic anxiety. The influence contribution ( $R^2$ ) of 0.383 which is a percentage of 38.3% of the variation in academic anxiety can be explained by Impostor Syndrome and academic toughness. It is known in the above that the coefficient interval in the range of 0.200-0.399 is in the low category. This shows that the level of influence of Impostor Syndrome and academic resilience on academic anxiety is included in the low category.

The results of this finding are consistent with previous research by Firmansyah (2020), which states that anxiety experienced by individuals can arise due to various factors, including excessive social demands that are difficult or cannot be met by individuals, expectations of achievement that are too high beyond one's abilities, such as a tendency to be perfectionist, feelings of inferiority, lack of preparedness in dealing with difficult situations, as well as negative mindsets and perceptions of situations or oneself.

Perfectionism is positively related to anxiety, as shown by various studies showing that higher levels of perfectionism can predict an increase in anxiety symptoms in adolescents (Hameed & Arzeen, 2023). Maladaptive perfectionism, which is characterized by a lack of conformity to perfect standards, is a significant risk factor for anxiety, especially in college students (Park & Flannery-Schroeder, 2023). Low self-esteem is significantly associated with higher levels of anxiety, with research showing that low self-esteem accounts for about 15% of the variation in anxiety symptoms in adolescents (Hameed & Arzeen, 2023). In contrast, higher self-esteem is associated with lower anxiety, which suggests that interventions aimed at improving self-esteem may help reduce anxiety symptoms (Park & Flannery-Schroeder, 2023).

Research conducted by Olen Muawanah and Asdar (2021), also shows that students' academic anxiety is often influenced by internal factors. Students who are easily offended by other people's words or have external attribution tend to experience anxiety. Conversely, if students demonstrate a strong commitment to their academic goals, this can help reduce anxiety. Their academic behavior will be affected by their emotional state, whether they are easily provoked by emotions or have stable commitments. Research by Fahira and Hayat (2021) also supports this, by showing that high negative feelings in an academic context can lead to increased anxiety.

Based on the results of the descriptive test, an overview of the distribution of data on the measurement of the academic anxiety scale in Economics and Business, Mulawarman University can be obtained which finds that the subjects in this study are dominated by moderate academic anxiety. The level of anxiety in students should be in the low category (Andri et al., 2021). Supported by previous research by Istiantoro (2018) which explained that there were 2,788 students or 71.74% of 184 students who experienced moderate level of academic anxiety. Previous research (Azyz et al., 2019) also found that as many as 70.30% of 330 IAIN Kediri students experienced moderate academic anxiety due to a psychological condition that was rushed to complete academic assignments or called self-deformed behavior.

High levels of anxiety can hinder an individual's concentration and memory, which has an impact on confusion and ineffective learning. Research shows that anxiety can appear in various forms, such as fear of public speaking and anxiety about evaluation, which can interfere with academic performance (Hayadi et al., 2024). Individuals often experience increased anxiety when facing presentations and exams, resulting in forgetfulness and lack of focus (Hayadi et al., 2024). In addition, excessive anxiety can cause physical

symptoms, such as shortness of breath, which further affects cognitive function (Berutu & Mutiawati, 2023). Therefore, it is important to address anxiety in order to create a supportive learning environment, which can contribute to student success and well-being (Cai et al., 2024).

Academic anxiety is an important factor that affects an individual's learning potential, as revealed by Chakraborty (2023) who states that many individuals doubt their abilities, which results in low self-confidence and affects academic performance. This is in line with the findings of Cai et al. (2024) who emphasized that this anxiety is often caused by uncertainty about evaluation results and pressure to achieve certain standards. Both researchers highlight that feelings of worthlessness, such as Impostor Syndrome, as well as academic stress can create a negative cycle that hinders the development of learning skills, pointing to the importance of social support and stress management strategies to reduce the impact of such anxiety.

Based on the hypothesis test of the gradual regression analysis, the results were obtained that Impostor Syndrome on academic anxiety in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business who are pursuing strata 1 shows no significant influence. This means that the minor hypothesis in this study is not accepted, that is, there is no influence of Impostor Syndrome on academic anxiety in students.

Impostor Syndrome is characterized by self-doubt and feelings of being a con artist despite apparent successes (Bakhtiar & Kutty, 2024). Individuals with a tendency to Impostor Syndrome often report low self-confidence, which can affect their academic performance (Kristoffersson et al., 2024). Research conducted by Dumitrescu et al. (2024), shows that the level of academic anxiety does not differ significantly between students with and without Impostor Syndrome tendencies. The relationship between self-confidence and anxiety is complex, with some studies showing a weak negative correlation (Yilmaz, 2024).

Research shows that although Impostor Syndrome is associated with negative feelings such as self-doubt and anxiety, it can also encourage individuals to strive harder and achieve better levels of performance. For example, one study found a significant positive correlation between Impostor Syndrome and achievement motivation, suggesting that those who feel like impostors may be more motivated to succeed (Varsha & Singh, 2024). In addition, the fear of disappointing others can improve academic performance by encouraging a strong desire to excel (Paul et al., 2024).

Based on hypothesis testing using gradual model regression analysis, it was found that academic resilience had a significant effect on academic anxiety in a positive direction. This means that the minor hypothesis in this study is accepted, namely the influence between academic resilience and academic anxiety in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business who are pursuing strata 1. The results of this hypothesis test also explain that the higher the academic toughness, the lower the academic anxiety. On the other hand, if the lower the level of academic resilience, the higher the level of academic anxiety.

Academic resilience is an important attribute that allows students to face academic challenges and reduce anxiety. This includes self-efficacy, self-regulation, and recovery, which are essential for overcoming pressures in the educational environment (Shen et al., 2024). Academic resilience, or the ability to overcome and survive in the face of academic challenges, can affect the level of anxiety experienced by individuals (Muhajirin, 2022). Research shows that students who have resilience can turn feelings of helplessness into strength, thereby improving their academic performance (Rachmawati et al., 2024). In addition, academic resilience has a positive correlation with academic achievement, as it encourages perseverance and adaptive help-seeking behavior (Almulla, 2024).

A study by Azizah and Satwika (2021) found a link between academic resilience and anxiety. Individuals with low resilience tend to be less confident, which can lead to anxiety, while those with high resilience are more confident. Students with low resilience also reported higher anxiety related to cognitive tests, especially in the context of avoidance-based achievement goals (May et al., 2023). Resilience affects how students set and pursue academic goals.

Another study, conducted by Majed et al. (2024) shows that the link between academic resilience and academic anxiety is very important. Individuals with low levels of resilience tend to experience higher levels of anxiety, stress, and depression. This shows that resilience plays a protective factor in facing academic challenges. In contrast, individuals with relatively high resilience typically have a greater sense of self-confidence, which helps to reduce their anxiety levels. This happens because resilience can improve an individual's ability to self-regulate and reduce mental fatigue. Academic resilience helps individuals overcome academic stress, anxiety, and also setbacks (Almulla, 2024).

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis, an overview of the distribution of data from the measurement of the academic resilience scale in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business who are pursuing strata 1 is dominated by the medium category or 47.7%. Academic resilience refers to self-understanding in responding, achieving, managing emotions, and taking advantage of opportunities in academic challenges so that they can withstand the negative or anxious effects of such pressure (Trifiriani & Agung, 2018). Students who face various obstacles in their academic journey are able to manage and overcome anxiety efficiently. They use stress as a driver to improve academic performance, develop positive coping strategies, and stay focused on achieving academic goals.

The data analysis in this study that has been carried out also involves the application of additional hypothesis tests, which have the purpose of investigating in more detail and depth the relationship between the aspects of independent variables and dependent variables, both in terms of influence and relationship. Additional hypothesis tests were carried out through the use of complete model multivariate regression analysis, partial correlation, and final model. The results of the full-model multivariate analysis revealed that aspects of

the academic resilience variable can have an impact on the aspects of the academic anxiety variable.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) Impostor Syndrome and academic toughness affect academic anxiety in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University. (2) There was no significant effect between Impostor Syndrome and academic anxiety in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University. (3) Academic resilience affects academic anxiety in students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mulawarman University. The development prospects of the results in this study include the development of training programs to improve students' academic resilience, which can focus on coping skills and stress management to reduce academic anxiety. Additionally, further research may investigate other variables, such as social support or personal factors, that may influence academic anxiety levels among college students.

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