

Academic resilience: Exploring the role of religiosity and self-efficacy in facing academic challenges

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ABSTRACT

Students inevitably face various academic challenges throughout their university journey. These challenges highlight the crucial role of academic resilience, which enables students to effectively channel their motivation, cognitive abilities, and actions towards achieving their academic goals. This research investigates how religiosity and self-efficacy positively contribute to students' academic resilience. Using a quantitative explanatory approach, data was collected from 196 students at STAI Syubbanul Wathon Magelang via questionnaires and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The findings indicate that religiosity significantly impacts academic resilience ($p < 0.001$), as evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 (below 0.05). Similarly, self-efficacy also significantly influences academic resilience ($p < 0.001$), with a significance value of 0.000 (below 0.05). Collectively, both religiosity and self-efficacy are confirmed to jointly enhance students' academic resilience.

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Introduction

Students in the modern era face a diverse array of challenges that significantly differ from those of previous decades (Muchamad Chairudin, 2023). These obstacles extend beyond academics, encompassing financial pressures, time management demands, stress-induced mental health issues, the need for work-life balance, ethical and social dilemmas, and even post-graduation career preparations (Muthoifin et al., 2024). Navigating this complexity requires students to optimize their spirit and motivation, manage their cognitive abilities, and strategically determine steps to achieve their desired academic goals (Syalviana, 2021). The prevalence of these difficulties underscores the urgency of resilience, especially academic resilience, for university students. Academic resilience equips students with the ability to adapt to challenging situations and overcome various problems (Hadisi, Hakim, Musthan, Nashihin, & Kendari, 2023), both within their studies and in their personal lives (Alam et al., 2023).

Academic resilience is defined as a student's capacity to adapt and remain steadfast when confronting difficulties, pressures, or stress related to their academic pursuits, which constantly evolve over time (Astuti, Haryati, & Atika, 2022). This ability is crucial in the complex and demanding university environment. Students need the capability to complete their higher education, maintain a balance between academic and personal matters, and address various other problems that may arise during their study period (Syalviana, 2021).

Students with high levels of self-fortitude tend to maintain motivation and productivity, even when facing challenges that could affect their mental health. Without adequate resilience, students risk experiencing a decline in academic performance, dropping out of college, or even facing mental health crises (Nadhifah, 2021). Data from the PDDikti Kemendikbud Higher Education Statistics Report in 2020 indicates that the percentage of students who dropped out of college in Indonesia reached 7%, or approximately 602,208 out of a total of 8,483,213 registered students.

This figure includes students who were expelled, dropped out, or withdrew, with private higher education institutions accounting for the highest number (79.5%). This dropout phenomenon suggests low academic resilience among students, leading to their failure to integrate academic and social skills in higher education. Furthermore, the decision to continue or discontinue studies is also significantly influenced by students' psychological and personal factors.

It's important to note that academic resilience is not an innate trait but rather a skill that can be developed through practice and experience in managing pressure (Robbaniyah, Primaningtyas, & Bayuny, 2024). The student's surrounding environment plays a significant role in helping them practice and cope with emerging pressures. In this context, religiosity and self-efficacy are crucial factors that contribute to building student fortitude during their academic journey. Religiosity can serve as a coping resource when students face pressure, helping them rediscover meaning in life amidst difficult situations (Poerwanto, 2017). Meanwhile, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their own capacity to perform or accomplish an activity under specific conditions, which significantly influences the achievement of desired academic outcomes (Fitriyah, Wijayadi, & Hayati, 2020). Students' academic self-belief, when accompanied by clear goals, will largely determine their future success in academic behavior.

Previous research has explored the relationship between religiosity and self-efficacy with various influencing factors. For instance, a study by Alam et al. (2023) demonstrated that religiosity and self-efficacy, independently, had a positive effect on student academic performance. However, this study found that when both factors were combined simultaneously, they did not show a significant influence on academic achievement. That research focused on the impact on academic outcomes among pesantren students, not academic resilience. Conversely, another study by Salim et al. (2020) measured resilience using an adaptation of The 14 Item Resilience Scale (RS 14) and academic self-efficacy. Their results revealed that academic self-efficacy plays an important role in measuring student resilience levels. A key difference from the current study lies in the measurement instruments; their study used the MARS Scale for religiosity and Bandura's Self-Efficacy Scale for self-efficacy.

Given these research gaps and methodological differences in previous studies, the current research aims to specifically explore how religiosity and self-efficacy influence the level of academic resilience among university students. This article particularly focuses on analyzing the simultaneous and partial impact of these two factors on students' academic resilience capabilities.

Theoretical Framework

The present study investigates the intricate relationship between religiosity, self-efficacy, and academic resilience among university students. This framework posits that both religiosity and self-efficacy serve as significant psychological resources that empower students to navigate and overcome the multifaceted challenges inherent in their academic journey.

1. Academic Resilience

Academic resilience refers to the capacity of students to effectively cope with, adapt to, and ultimately thrive amidst academic adversities, pressures, and setbacks (Nair & Kumar, 2024; Anjum & Roman, 2023). It is not merely about enduring difficulties, but actively engaging in adaptive processes that lead to positive academic outcomes despite challenging circumstances (Almulla, 2024). Key components of academic resilience often include perseverance, self-belief, adaptability, and positive coping strategies. Students with high academic resilience are better equipped to manage stress, bounce back from academic failures (e.g., poor grades, rejected proposals), maintain motivation, and ultimately achieve their educational goals, thereby reducing the risk of academic disengagement or dropout (Nadhifah, 2021). Building upon the broader concept of psychological resilience, which emphasizes an individual's ability to maintain well-being despite adversity (Beltman & Mansfield, 2018), academic resilience specifically contextualizes this capability within the educational domain (Winters, 2022).

2. Religiosity

Religiosity is understood as the degree to which an individual adheres to, believes in, and practices a particular religion or spiritual conviction (Allport & Ross, 1967; Glock, 1962). It encompasses various dimensions, including:

- a. Belief (Ideological Dimension). Personal convictions about the existence of a divine being or higher power, and acceptance of religious doctrines.
- b. Practice (Ritualistic Dimension). Engagement in religious rituals, ceremonies, and devotional activities (e.g., prayer, meditation, attending religious services).
- c. Experience (Experiential Dimension). Subjective feelings, emotions, and sensations related to one's spiritual life or connection with the divine.
- d. Knowledge (Intellectual Dimension). Familiarity with the tenets, scriptures, and history of one's religion.
- e. Consequence (Consequential Dimension). The impact of religious beliefs and practices on an individual's daily life, ethical conduct, and social interactions.

From a psychological perspective, religiosity can provide individuals with a comprehensive meaning system, a source of social support, and a framework for coping with stress and adversity (Mahfoud et al., 2023). When faced with academic challenges, students who are highly religious may draw upon their faith as a coping mechanism, finding solace, hope, and purpose that strengthens their resolve (Sari & Sutarto, 2023). This spiritual resource can foster a sense of optimism, reduce feelings of anxiety, and encourage perseverance, thereby contributing to enhanced academic resilience.

Religiosity serves as a crucial protective factor for students navigating academic challenges, buffering the impact of stress and fostering adaptive responses. Its contribution to academic resilience can be understood through several key mechanisms. *First*, religiosity provides a powerful meaning-making framework. By imbuing life and academic pursuits with a sense of purpose and divine connection, students are better equipped to interpret setbacks not as insurmountable failures but as part of a larger, meaningful journey (Azizi, Ishak, & Hilmi, 2022). This perspective, often rooted in positive psychology's emphasis on meaning and purpose, enables students to maintain motivation and persist even when facing academic difficulties, as their efforts extend beyond mere grades to a higher calling or personal growth (Li, 2022). *Second*, religiosity equips individuals with diverse and effective religious coping strategies. As articulated by Trierweiler & Franklin (2023) in his theory of religious coping, students can engage in positive religious coping mechanisms such as prayer, seeking spiritual guidance, or finding comfort in sacred texts. These strategies help manage stress, reframe negative thoughts, and foster a sense of hope and agency, directly enhancing their ability to overcome academic hurdles. This adaptive coping allows students to maintain emotional equilibrium and direct their energy towards productive solutions rather than being overwhelmed by anxiety.

Finally, religiosity profoundly impacts emotional regulation and the cultivation of hope. Regular religious practices often involve mindfulness, reflection, and community engagement, which can significantly reduce anxiety and promote inner peace (Abdel-Khalek et al., 2019). This cultivation of emotional stability is vital for academic performance. Furthermore, faith often instills an intrinsic sense of optimism and hope, believing in a positive future or divine assistance. This spiritual hope acts as a robust internal resource, empowering students to persevere through academic setbacks with resilience and a belief in their capacity to succeed.

3. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, a core construct within Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, refers to an individual's belief in their own capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Stajkovic & Sergent, 2019). It is not about one's actual skills, but rather the *belief* in what one can do with those skills. Bandura emphasized that self-efficacy influences:

- a. Choice of Activities. Individuals are more likely to engage in tasks where they feel competent.
- b. Effort Expended. Those with high self-efficacy tend to exert more effort when faced with obstacles.
- c. Persistence. They are more likely to persist in the face of setbacks and recover quickly from failures.
- d. Thought Patterns and Emotional Reactions. High self-efficacy is associated with less anxiety and more positive thought patterns.

In the academic context, academic self-efficacy specifically relates to students' beliefs in their ability to successfully complete academic tasks, achieve academic goals, and overcome academic challenges (Bandura, 1971). Students with high academic self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, engage in effective learning strategies, manage their time efficiently, and persevere when encountering academic difficulties (Jiang, Zhang, Li, & Luo, 2023). This strong belief in one's own capabilities directly contributes to their ability to adapt and overcome academic stressors, making it a powerful predictor of academic resilience.

4. The Interplay of Religiosity, Self-Efficacy, and Academic Resilience

This research proposes that religiosity and self-efficacy do not operate in isolation but rather interact and collectively contribute to students' academic resilience. Religiosity can provide a foundational sense of meaning and spiritual strength, which may, in turn, bolster an individual's general self-efficacy (Tindaon, Fathiyah, & Paji, 2024). For instance, a student's faith might instill a belief that they are divinely supported, enhancing their confidence to face academic hurdles (Syarifah, Latifah, & Puspitasari, 2021). Conversely, strong self-efficacy in academic tasks might empower students to actively engage in religious coping strategies, knowing they have the capacity to apply these resources effectively. The theoretical model guiding this study posits that:

- a. Religiosity will positively influence academic resilience, providing spiritual coping mechanisms and a sense of purpose.
- b. Self-efficacy will positively influence academic resilience, by fostering persistence, effort, and adaptive coping strategies.
- c. Religiosity and self-efficacy will collectively contribute to enhancing academic resilience, potentially through a synergistic effect where the spiritual strength from religiosity complements the belief in one's capabilities from self-efficacy.

By exploring these relationships, this study aims to provide deeper insights into the psychological and spiritual resources that enable students to thrive in their academic endeavors, particularly in the context of higher education challenges.

Method

Based on the sample calculation, 196 students aged 17-22 years from STAI Syubbanul Wathon were selected for this study. Random sampling was utilized as the sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2017), ensuring that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected (Syaiful Anam, 2023). This technique aimed to produce a fair and unbiased representation of all active students across various semesters. Data was primarily collected by asking these students to complete questionnaires.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{383}{1 + 383(0,05)^2}$$
$$n = 195,6$$

Three instruments were used to measure the research variables, all employing a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree):

Religiosity Scale. The Moslem Attitude towards Religiosity Scale (MARS), adapted from Amir (2021), was used to measure religiosity in Muslim individuals. This is a unidimensional scale consisting of 9 items, such as "I perform the five daily prayers every day." The scale demonstrated acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.60. **Self-Efficacy Scale.** To measure academic self-efficacy, a scale adapted from Ilmiani et al. (2021) concept of self-efficacy was utilized. This multidimensional scale includes three dimensions: magnitude (the level of belief), strength (the conviction of the belief), and generality (the tendency of the belief across situations). It comprises 6 items, for example, "I am able to handle my tasks calmly when I encounter difficulties because I am confident in my abilities." This scale also showed acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.60. **Academic Resilience Scale.** The instrument for academic resilience in this study was developed by the researchers, based on the aspects of resilience identified by Hunsu et al. (2022). This scale consists of 5 items, with an example statement being, "I can face difficulties calmly because I am confident in my abilities." This scale also recorded a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.60, indicating its reliability.

Before the main data analysis, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality of the instruments. **Validity Test.** This test assesses whether a questionnaire accurately measures the data it is intended to measure (Ghozali, 2018). An item is considered valid if it has a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) ≥ 0.3 with the total score (Azwar, 2020). Items with a correlation below 0.3 were deemed invalid and excluded from further analysis. **Reliability Test.** Used to assess the consistency of a questionnaire as an indicator of a particular variable or construct (Ghozali, 2018). A questionnaire is considered reliable if the obtained Cronbach's alpha value is ≥ 0.60 (Purwanto, 2018), indicating consistent or stable responses over time or across items.

The collected data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis. This method was employed to explore the relationship between one dependent variable (academic resilience) and two or more independent variables (religiosity and self-efficacy) (Sugiyono, 2019). The primary goal of this statistical analysis was to understand the magnitude of the independent variables' influence on the dependent variable. To ensure the appropriateness of multiple linear regression analysis, several classical assumption tests were performed:

1. Normality Test. To check if the residual data were normally distributed.
2. Heteroscedasticity Test. To ensure that the variance of the residuals is constant across all levels of the independent variables.
3. Multicollinearity Test. To ensure that the independent variables do not have excessively high correlations with each other (Purwanto, 2019).

Result

1. Profile of Respondent

The data collection revealed that the majority of respondents were female, totaling 151 individuals, while 45 respondents were male. A complete overview of the respondent profile can be found in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Profile of Respondent

Respondent Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45	22.96%
	Female	151	77.04%
	Total	196	100%
Age	Under 18 years	7	3.57%
	19 years	56	28.57%
	20 years	66	33.67%
	21 years	15	7.65%

	Over 21 years	52	26.53%
	Total	196	100%
Education Background	General Senior High School	45	22.96%
	Vocational High School	79	40.31%
	Religious Senior High School	72	36.73%
	Total	196	100%

Source: Data processed (2025)

2. Validity and Reliability Test

Before testing the hypotheses, it is essential to examine the research instruments used for data collection. The quality of the research data depends on the quality of the instruments employed. The results of the instrument test indicate that all items in the research instrument meet the required quality standards, including adequate levels of validity and reliability. Validity is assessed based on the condition that the correlation between each item and the total score must be at least 0.3. Items that do not meet this criterion are considered invalid within the research instrument (Azwar, 2020). The results of the validity and reliability tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Item	r count	r table threshold	Validity	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
Religiosity (X1)	RG 1	0.762**	0.3	Valid	0.872	Reliable
	RG 2	0.817**		Valid		
	RG 3	0.699**		Valid		
	RG 4	0.864**		Valid		
	RG 5	0.831**		Valid		
	RG 6	0.873**		Valid		
	RG 7	0.834**		Valid		
	RG 8	0.861**		Valid		
	RG 9	0.823**		Valid		
Self-Efficacy (X2)	SE 1	0.716**	0.3	Valid	0.929	Reliable
	SE 2	0.874**		Valid		
	SE 3	0.637**		Valid		
	SE 4	0.787**		Valid		
	SE 5	0.810**		Valid		
	SE 6	0.752**		Valid		
Academic Resilience (Y)	AR 1	0.667**	0.3	Valid	0.916	Reliable
	AR 2	0.786**		Valid		
	AR 3	0.842**		Valid		
	AR 4	0.649**		Valid		
	AR 5	0.756**		Valid		

Source: Data processed (2025)

3. Classical Assumption Tests

Classical assumption tests were conducted to evaluate potential violations in the observed data, including normality of residuals, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The normality test is crucial for assessing the statistical significance of regression coefficients; if the regression model does not meet the assumption of normal distribution, the results of the regression analysis become questionable. As shown in Table 3, the Asymp. Sig value was 0.268, which is greater than 0.05,

indicating that the data are normally distributed. Next, a multicollinearity test was performed to examine whether multicollinearity issues existed within the data. The results from Table 3 reveal that all independent variables had a tolerance value greater than 0.1 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value less than 10, confirming the absence of multicollinearity issues.

The final test was the heteroscedasticity test, which aims to determine if there is an unequal variance of residuals across observations. This test assesses whether there is an uneven spread of residuals over the observation periods. An evaluation of the scatterplot pattern (as shown in Figure 1) can help identify indications of heteroscedasticity. In this case, the data points were irregularly scattered around the regression line, without any particular pattern such as a wave, suggesting no heteroscedasticity in the model.

Table 3. Normality and multicollinearity tests

Normality tests		Multicollinearity test		
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	Asymp. Sig	Variabel	Tolerance	VIF
1,301	0,268	X1	0,237	4,236
		X2	0,216	3,153

Source: Data processed (2025)

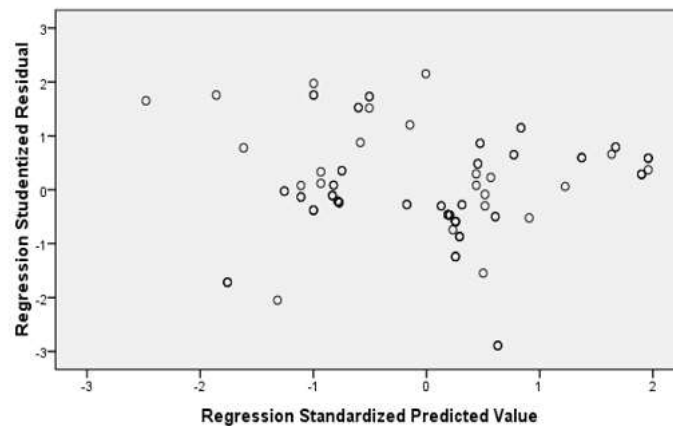


Figure 1. Heteroskedastisitas test

Source: Data processed (2025)

Berdasarkan chart di atas dapat dipaparkan, tidak ada pola yang jelas serta titik – titik yang tersebar ke atas dan di bawah 0, sehingga bisa di simpulkan jika tidak terjadi heteroskedastisitas.

4. Hypothesis Testing

This study utilized multiple linear regression analysis to answer the research questions regarding the influence of religiosity and self-efficacy on academic resilience. This test assesses the relationship between independent variables (X1 and X2) and the dependent variable (Y). The results of the test are interpreted based on the significance value (Sig.). If the obtained Sig. value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the independent variable has a significant influence on the dependent variable. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	7,861	2,264		1,609	0,111
Religiusitas	0,761	0,119	0,428	4,090	0,000
Efikasi Diri	0,611	0,109	0,328	2,090	0,000
<i>Adjusted R-squared</i>	0,712				

Source: Data processed (2025)

Based on Table 4, the following regression equation was obtained:

$$Y = 7.861 + 0.428X_1 + 0.328X_2 + e$$

From this equation, the following can be explained:

- Constant (7.861): This value indicates that if both religiosity (X1) and self-efficacy (X2) are zero, the predicted value of academic resilience is 7.861.
- Religiosity Coefficient (0.428): A regression coefficient of 0.428 for religiosity (X1) suggests that for every one-unit increase in religiosity, academic resilience (Y) is expected to increase by 0.428, assuming self-efficacy and other factors remain constant. This indicates that religiosity positively contributes to academic resilience.
- Self-Efficacy Coefficient (0.328): A regression coefficient of 0.328 for self-efficacy (X2) indicates that for every one-unit increase in self-efficacy, academic resilience (Y) is expected to increase by 0.328, assuming religiosity and other factors remain constant. This also shows that self-efficacy has a positive influence on academic resilience, meaning higher self-efficacy leads to a greater ability to enhance academic resilience.

Discussion

1. The Influence of Religiosity on Academic Resilience

The hypothesis testing results unequivocally indicate that religiosity has a significant and positive influence on academic resilience. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H1). This robust finding suggests that a higher level of student religiosity correlates with stronger academic resilience, enabling them to navigate academic challenges more effectively. A particularly notable finding from the descriptive data is the highest response on the religiosity item, "I perform the five daily prayers every day." This highlights that consistent and deeply internalized religious practices can serve as a crucial foundation for enhancing students' academic resilience, acting as a profound source of internal strength, providing a sense of calm, hope, and purpose that helps students cope with academic pressures and challenges.

This research aligns with Nadhifah (2021) study, which states that religious belief positively impacts individual characteristics, personal development, spirit, and psychological adaptation in students. Within the Islamic context, a strong faith—encompassing a deep understanding and firm conviction in Allah SWT and religious teachings—provides an essential spiritual foundation. A steadfast belief in the existence and benevolent attributes of God can cultivate optimism, reduce anxiety, and foster perseverance, all of which are key components of resilience. These findings resonate strongly with theoretical frameworks that position religiosity as a vital protective factor. For instance, Pargament's religious coping theory explains how individuals actively utilize their religious beliefs and practices to manage stress and adversity (Ahles et al., 2016). The consistent performance of daily prayers, as highlighted in the descriptive data, exemplifies a direct

engagement in positive religious coping, offering a structured outlet for solace and spiritual reflection that can mitigate academic pressures.

Furthermore, the positive influence of religiosity on academic resilience can be understood through its role in fostering meaning-making and psychological well-being. As conceptualized within positive psychology, specifically Seligman's PERMA model, religiosity often provides a profound sense of meaning and purpose in life (Abbasifard et al., 2022). For students, this spiritual grounding can transform academic struggles into opportunities for growth and deeper understanding, rather than insurmountable obstacles. This perspective is critical for resilience, as it enables individuals to reframe negative experiences and find intrinsic motivation to persist. The regular practice of prayer, for example, can serve as a daily ritual that reinforces this sense of purpose, enhances emotional regulation, and instills a pervasive sense of hope, directly contributing

2. The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Academic Resilience

The hypothesis testing results indicate that self-efficacy has a significant and positive influence on academic resilience. This is supported by a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_2). Thus, it can be concluded that self-efficacy positively contributes to students' ability to cope with academic challenges. An analysis of item responses reveals that the highest score for the self-efficacy variable was on the statement, "I can handle my tasks when I encounter difficulties." This finding reflects students' strong belief in their capacity to overcome academic obstacles. Such conviction fosters responsible and proactive behavior when dealing with challenging assignments.

This study aligns with previous research by Putu et al., (2020), which emphasized the crucial role of self-efficacy in developing student resilience, particularly in completing final assignments. Similarly, Oktaningrum & Santhoso (2019) also demonstrated a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience. Students with high self-efficacy tend to view difficult academic tasks as opportunities for personal growth rather than threats. This perception not only helps them overcome barriers but also boosts positive motivation to achieve academic goals. Conversely, students with low self-efficacy may struggle to develop the adaptive strategies necessary to face challenges.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, this research unequivocally demonstrates that both religiosity and self-efficacy play a significant and positive role in students' academic resilience. These findings indicate that higher levels of religiosity and self-efficacy empower students to more effectively face and recover from various academic challenges. This underscores that spiritual dimensions and belief in one's own capabilities are crucial assets for students to maintain motivation, manage stress, and achieve their academic goals amidst the complexities of university life.

Given the importance of these two factors, it is recommended that educational institutions, particularly STAI Syubbanul Wathon Magelang, develop programs focused on strengthening student religiosity and self-efficacy. Strategic steps could include guidance and counseling programs that integrate religious values, as well as training to enhance self-confidence and problem-solving skills. For students, it is advised to actively deepen their religious beliefs as a source of strength and continuously cultivate self-efficacy through challenging learning experiences to foster optimal academic resilience.

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