

## The Relationship Between Optimism and Academic Flow for Students of The Faculty of Psychology UNM Class Of 2020 During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract

*Academic challenges experienced by students while undergoing online lectures are expected to be a driving force to achieve flow conditions, but students perceive them as a burden that can hinder the learning process. This study aims to determine the relationship between optimism and academic flow of students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM class of 2020 during COVID-19. Using quantitative research methods. The subjects of this study were 354 students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM class 2020. The measuring instrument used in this study was the Flow Inventory for student's scale by Yuwanto and the optimism scale by Suryaningsih. The data were analyzed using the Spearman correlation technique. The results showed that there was a positive relationship between optimism and academic flow of students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM class of 2020 ( $r = 0.538$  and  $p = <0.001$ ). This study illustrates that the higher the optimism, the higher the academic flow experienced by students.*

**Keywords:** *academic flow; optimism; students.*

### Abstrak

Tantangan akademik yang dialami oleh mahasiswa selama menjalani perkuliahan *online* diharapkan menjadi penggerak untuk mencapai kondisi *flow*, namun mahasiswa menganggapnya sebagai beban yang mampu menghambat proses belajar. Penelitian bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara optimisme dengan *flow* akademik mahasiswa Fakultas Psikologi UNM angkatan 2020 selama COVID-19. Menggunakan metode penelitian kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 354 orang mahasiswa Fakultas Psikologi UNM angkatan 2020. Alat ukur yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah skala *The Flow Inventory for student* oleh Yuwanto dan skala optimisme oleh Suryaningsih. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan teknik korelasi *Spearman*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan positif antara optimisme dengan *flow* akademik mahasiswa Fakultas Psikologi UNM angkatan 2020 ( $r = 0,538$  dan  $p = <0,001$ ). Penelitian ini menggambarkan bahwa semakin tinggi optimisme, maka semakin tinggi *flow* akademik yang dialami mahasiswa.

**Kata kunci:** *flow akademik; mahasiswa; optimisme.*

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## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 attack has had a negative impact on all aspects of human life, one of which is education. Herlina and Suherman (2020); Kuswanto (2021), stated that the education sector faced serious problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. Khasanah, Pramudiyanto, and Widuroyekti (2020); Nasution (2021) stated that Indonesia is a country with a high number of COVID-19 exposures. The first time COVID-19 was confirmed to be in Indonesia was in early March 2020 and continues to increase until now.

Hakpantria and Trivena (2019); Kulbi, (2020) stated that Indonesia is one of the countries with a high positive number of COVID-19. A total of 1,528 confirmed cases, 114 most recent confirmed cases, 136 deaths, and a total of 14 additional deaths on 1 April 2020. Based on data from [kawalcovid19.id](http://kawalcovid19.id) 2 July 2021, 2,228,938 Indonesians were confirmed exposed, 267,539 were in treatment, 1,901,865 recovered and 59,534 died. The government has issued several policies to minimize the spread of COVID-19. One of the policies issued was through a circular letter from the Ministry of Education and Culture (KEMENDIKBUD) of the Directorate of Higher Education No1 in 2020 regarding the prevention of the spread of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) in universities.

Khasanah, Pramudiyanto, and Widuroyekti (2020) stated that the regulation had a significant impact in the world of education. The learning system has changed from face-to-face on campus to school from home. The government's policy to carry out school from home and maintain distance and not to crowd must be followed by changing the offline learning mode to online. Online learning is carried out to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and facilitate communication in the

delivery of teaching materials so that teaching and learning activities can still be held.

Pawicara and Conilie (2020) suggest that online learning is a distance learning system that uses a network as a medium for learning. Through several supporting applications such as zoom, google meet and others, students and lecturers can still carry out the learning process and communicate with each other. Online learning is present as a solution during the COVID-19 pandemic, but still has shortcomings in its implementation. Boredom can be felt by students during online lectures because of the flat intonation, the absence of direct interaction and too monotonous. Vitasari (2016) argues that the learning process that is boring, uncommunicative, and ineffective can hinder the process of delivering material so that it is difficult for students to understand.

Pawicara and Conilie (2020) stated that learning saturation occurs because of the large demands for students to always comply with the rules of strict lecture assignments and still have to be done. This learning saturation will greatly affect students for the continuity of their education. Arirahmanto (2018) suggests that students who experience learning saturation cannot fully concentrate and understand the essence of the subject matter given. Because boredom is the peak of feelings and brains due to continuous learning pressure. Students will tend to be indifferent while studying by showing a lack of confidence and avoiding it and not understanding the lessons that have been given.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) suggests that one of the conditions needed by individuals in their daily activities is flow. Individuals with flow will enjoy and carry out their activities with full focus, happiness, and comfort, so that individuals sometimes feel that time passes very quickly when doing activities. Lee (2005) suggests that flow is an internal

condition that provides positive experiences for individuals, so they can still control themselves when carrying out activities. Asakawa (2004) suggests that maintaining student feelings is very important to maintain positive emotions that will lead to feelings of pleasure (enjoyment), which will have an impact on high intrinsic motivation in the learning process.

Santoso (2014) argues that flow conditions must also be presented in the academic field so that students can focus and enjoy every task given by the lecturer. Chandra (2013) suggests that flow is a condition when individuals can concentrate, bring comfort, and have motivation when doing an activity, including learning activities. Yuwanto (2011) suggests that individuals who have flow in the learning process will feel time is passing quickly because they enjoy the activities they are doing too much. This condition is called academic flow.

Gatari (2020) suggests that academic flow has a positive impact on the learning ability of each individual. The results of research conducted by Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, and Shernoff (2003) show that individuals who achieve flow have a desire to undergo academic activities, increase academic abilities, are more enthusiastic when dealing with challenging tasks, and tend to be more focused, have a good mood. who are good and have high learning motivation compared to individuals who do not experience flow. Individuals who do not experience flow, have a tendency to quickly feel bored in doing tasks, causing attention and mood to be not good.

Arif (2013) suggests that individuals are able to achieve flow conditions if they have the ability to do tasks and have optimism. Seligman (2006) suggests that optimistic individuals will view negative events as only temporary, while those who are pessimistic state that

positive events are only temporary or coincidental. Optimistic individuals always think positively, and have a promising level of success in work or education. Thanoesya, Syahniar, and Ifdil (2016) suggest that optimistic individuals do not never give up and always look for problem solving with their own mindset. High confidence that the COVID-19 pandemic will definitely become endemic will foster optimism so that positive energy also continues to flow.

No exception for new students who have just entered college. Rianti (2021) suggests that online lectures indirectly require students to understand technology as a learning tool. Students also have to deal with technical obstacles such as non-existent network or internet quotas. New students who are in a period of adaptation in the world of lectures also need to maintain mental health so they don't experience stress. Rovika (2021) argues that new students who should have the opportunity to add relationships and identity in a new environment are actually hampered by the implementation of an online learning system. Chafsoh (2020) stated that new students feel a lot of anxiety and do not know how to solve problems during college, especially during the pandemic because they have never had college experience before.

Based on preliminary data conducted by researchers on August 28, 2021 via google form with a total of 54 students from the Faculty of Psychology, class of 2020. The results were that half of the respondents had low academic flow, with a total of 30 students having high academic flow and 24 others having low academic flow. low academic flow. Based on the results of the initial data collection above, it can be concluded that half of the 2020 Faculty of Psychology students have low academic flow.

Syahrani (2020) stated that students of the Psychology Faculty are required to be able to develop special skills such as making measuring

instruments, conducting training, psychoeducation and others. The work of assignments and reports has its own assessment standards. The Faculty of Psychology, Makassar State University wants to produce competent students by applying quite challenging lecture rules and providing many academic assignments. Students really need flow that is supported by an optimistic attitude that they can get through all academic challenges, especially since the online learning system was established.

Some examples of research on the relationship between Optimism I and Iflow that have been studied by Beard and Hoy (2010) with the research subject of elementary school teachers, the results of research on academic optimism can predict flow. A similar study was also conducted by Suryaningsih (2016) on the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy with high school students' academic flow which showed a relationship between optimism and academic flow. Given that several previous studies have been carried out but in the midst of different problem situations, the researchers decided to examine the relationship between optimism and academic flow in students of the Faculty of Psychology, Makassar State University, class of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Methodology**

The data collection technique used by the researcher in this study was to use a Likert scale type which was adapted from previous research. The scale in this study has four alternative answers, namely Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The weight for each choice given by the subject will be given a value of 4,3,2,1 for the favorable item and 1,2,3,4 for the unfavorable item

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(Azwar, 2017). In this study, researchers used two types of scales, namely the optimism scale and the academic flow scale. The hypothesis used in this study will be tested using the spearman rho technique with the help of JASP 14 for windows.

The population in this study were students of the Faculty of Psychology, Makassar State University, batch 2020 who were undergoing online learning. The selection of the population in this study is in accordance with the research objectives which measure the optimism and academic flow of students of the Faculty of Psychology, Makassar State University, class of 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Class of 2020 students were chosen to be the research population on the grounds that students of class 2020 are still relatively new in taking lectures and adding to the flexibility of practical data. Considering that there is no previous data and research was conducted at the Faculty of Psychology UNM on optimism and academic flow. New students are individuals who are new to the world of lectures different from schools and are required to adapt to the academic rules of the Faculty of Psychology UNM which are competitive online. The sample technique used in this study is using a total sampling technique, namely 384 students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM class 2020.

## **Result and Discussion**

The results of hypothesis testing using Spearman Rho correlation show that the value of the correlation coefficient between optimism and academic flow of students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM class of 2020 is  $r = 0.538$  with a significance value of  $<0.001$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). The value of the correlation coefficient and significance indicates that there is a relationship between optimism and academic flow in the 2020 Faculty of

Psychology UNM students with a moderate correlation. The coefficient indicates a positive result, which means that both variables have a positive direction. The higher the level of optimism, the higher the level of academic flow. Based on the results of the analysis of research data, it shows that the academic flow experienced by the majority of respondents is in the moderate category, this is because the majority of respondents' optimism is in the moderate category.

Students who have optimism will be confident in facing challenges and think positively, so that they can encourage the achievement of a state of academic flow. Seligman (2008) argues that optimism is a great belief that a person has when faced with a problem, so that a person will perceive it as just bad luck and it will end. Csikszentmihalyi (2014) suggests that there are two factors that affect flow conditions, namely external and internal. External factors are factors that come from the environment. Internal factors are factors that originate within the individual such as the level of ability in emotion regulation, motivation and perceiving a level of difficulty and ease of a given task.

The results showed that every student of the Faculty of Psychology UNM batch 2020 was able to achieve a state of flow, it's just that the level of achievement was different. The higher the optimism possessed by students, the higher the academic flow. This is in accordance with previous research, namely Suryaningsih (2016) which suggests that high optimism can provide a sense of security when undergoing academic activities, because optimism is part of personal resources for individuals. So with optimism, students can enjoy academic activities and achieve flow conditions.



## **Conclusion**

This study shows that there is a relationship between optimism and academic flow for students of the Faculty of Psychology UNM batch 2020. The description shows that the higher the optimism, the higher the academic flow. Students who have high optimism will think positively and have confidence that will affect the condition of academic flow in students.

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