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The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Leadership on Student Resilience during Institutional Transformation in the Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University

Nurindah Muslimah, Pricylia Chyntia Dewi Buntuang*

Faculty of Economic and Business, Management Study Program, Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia
Soekarno Hatta, No. KM 9, 94148, Palu, Indonesia
Email: [1]nurindahmuslimah.hr@gmail.com, [2,*]pricyliabuntuang@gmail.com
Correspondence Author Email: pricyliabuntuang@gmail.com
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Abstract−This study examines the effects of emotional intelligence and self-leadership on academic resilience among students during periods of institutional change at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University. Continuous changes in educational systems, institutional policies, and campus environments necessitate that students develop resilience to sustain their academic performance and overall well-being. Despite the recognized importance of psychological adaptability, there remains a gap in understanding how specific internal mechanisms buffer the stress of rapid organizational restructuring. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a Likert-scale questionnaire distributed to active undergraduate students. The questionnaire was developed based on established theoretical frameworks to ensure accurate measurement of the variables. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling, specifically targeting students from the 2022–2025 cohorts who have directly experienced the process of institutional transformation. Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to investigate the direct and combined effects of Emotional Intelligence (X1) and Self-Leadership (X2) on Student Resilience (Y). The findings indicate that both variables significantly predict student resilience. These results offer critical insights for university administrators and educational policymakers, suggesting that integrating psychological support frameworks into change management strategies is essential for fostering student adaptability and institutional stability.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Self-Leadership; Academic Resilience; Institutional Transformation; Higher Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Institutional transformation in higher education has accelerated as universities adapt to rapid developments in digital technology, academic governance, and quality assurance frameworks (Department of International Business and Trade, African Leadership University, Kigali, Rwanda, et al., 2025). These changes influence how students interact with academic systems, access learning resources, and adjust to new administrative structures (Mhlongo et al., 2023). The position of students as an intellectual force has a very vital role in overcoming common problems in community life(Buntuang, 2023). Transitions, such as the digitalization of academic processes, shifts in curriculum design, and restructuring of campus services, often introduce uncertainty and increased academic pressure (McCarthy et al., 2023). Such conditions may affect students' emotional stability, learning effectiveness, and overall well-being. Because institutional change is becoming a continuous process rather than a one-time shift, students are required to develop stronger psychological adaptability (Pham, 2024). Within this context, academic resilience emerges as a crucial ability that enables students to cope with disruptions, recover from academic setbacks, and maintain functioning during periods of institutional adjustment (Borazon & Chuang, 2023).

Academic resilience refers to a student's ability to respond positively to academic challenges, persist in difficult circumstances, and maintain motivation despite external pressures (Turyamureeba, n.d.). Resilient students are more adept at navigating unfamiliar learning environments, managing unexpected changes in academic systems, and remaining engaged during institutional transitions. This capability is influenced not only by external support systems but also by internal psychological factors (Yusnita et al., 2024). Two important internal factors discussed in the literature are emotional intelligence and self-leadership(Esen & Bulut, 2022; sustiyatik, n.d.). Both of these contribute to students' ability to regulate their emotions, direct their behavior, and stay motivated during periods of instability ("Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Students' Academic Performance at University Level," 2024).

In addition to structural and academic pressures, higher education is also facing a significant rise in psychological distress among students globally (Qazi et al., 2022). Recent empirical studies show that the prevalence of emotional and psychological problems among university students is alarmingly high. A large-scale analysis reported that 33.6% of students experience depressive symptoms and 39% experience clinical anxiety. Another regional study found that across several institutions, 44–70% of students demonstrate moderate to severe levels of depression, anxiety, or academic stress. Furthermore, a recent study published in *Acta Psychologica* (Che Musa et al., 2025) confirms that psychological distress particularly anxiety and academic stress continues to rise, with students reporting significant difficulty in emotional management during high-pressure academic periods. These data underscore the growing urgency of strengthening emotional regulation capacities within the student population, especially in institutions transforming (sudiartini et al., n.d.).

Preliminary results from this study show a critical vulnerability; students exhibit high emotional self-awareness but significantly poorer ability to regulate negative emotions when under academic pressure, despite the acknowledged importance of emotional intelligence in supporting student adaptability. This is reflected in their lowest

emotional intelligence score, which shows a lack of emotional control under demanding academic circumstances like concurrent deadlines, abrupt changes to the digital platform, or unclear administrative transitions (Qazi et al., 2022). These challenges are amplified within dynamic institutional environments. Importantly, a meta-analysis by Raimondi (Raimondi et al., 2024) confirms that among the most common deficiencies in university populations are impulse control issues and limited emotion regulation techniques, which are highly predictive of academic stress, maladaptive coping, and decreased adaptability. Therefore, a fundamental psychological issue that could impair students' academic resilience during institutional transformation is inadequate regulation of negative emotions.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Basic Research Framework

This study utilized a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence (X1) and self-leadership (X2) on Academic Resilience (Y) among undergraduate students during times of institutional change. A quantitative approach was chosen because it enables the researchers to measure psychological constructs numerically, test hypotheses, and assess the strength of the causal relationship between variables (Veritas University College, Malaysia & Ghanad, 2023). This method also offers statistical evidence that can be generalized to a larger population, provided that the sampling procedure is conducted systematically (Makwana et al., n.d.). Since the goal of this study was to determine the magnitude and direction of the effect of these internal psychological factors on academic resilience, a quantitative design offered a structured framework for objective and replicable analysis.

The research population comprised all active undergraduate students enrolled in the Faculty of Economics and Business at Tadulako University from the 2022 to 2025 academic cohorts. These cohorts were chosen because they directly experienced various stages of institutional transformation, including administrative restructuring, digitalization of academic services, adjustments to learning platforms, and changes in academic procedures. Their firsthand exposure to these changes made them relevant and suitable participants for examining how emotional and self-regulatory abilities contribute to academic resilience in a shifting academic environment.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who met the inclusion criteria for the study. This approach was appropriate because the research required respondents with firsthand experience of academic and administrative changes. By using purposive sampling, we ensured that the participants had characteristics aligned with the study's objectives, particularly their involvement in institutional transitions (Tajik et al., 2025). Methodological guidelines for regression analysis indicate that a sample size between 30 and 100 respondents is sufficient for producing statistically meaningful results (Memon et al., 2020). Given these considerations, a total of 57 students were selected, meeting the threshold for statistical adequacy and ensuring reliability in the inferential analysis.

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire that included closed-ended statements measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was developed based on established theoretical indicators for each variable (Boone & Boone, 2012). The indicators for Emotional Intelligence encompassed self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skills (Bongsu & Bakar, n.d.). Self-Leadership assessed aspects such as self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cueing strategies (Preece & Hamed, 2023).

The indicators of academic resilience included perseverance, reflecting and adaptive help-seeking, negative affect and emotional response (Ramadhani & Sagita, 2022). Respondents used Likert-scale items to express the degree of their agreement, enabling the effective quantification of psychological tendencies and behaviors (Koo & Yang, 2025). Before analysis, the collected data were checked for completeness and consistency. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation values, provided an overview of respondents' tendencies for each indicator and described the distribution of scores for each variable (Moreno, 2023). This descriptive analysis also helped identify patterns in students' emotional awareness, self-leadership strategies, and resilience levels within the context of institutional transformation.

Inferential analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to examine the relationships among Emotional Intelligence (X_1), Self-Leadership (X_2), and Academic Resilience (Y). Multiple regression was chosen because it allows for the simultaneous assessment of the independent effects of X_1 and X_2, as well as their combined predictive contributions to Y (Sun et al., 2023). This technique helps determine whether the independent variables significantly influence academic resilience and how much they account for changes in the dependent variable. The statistical analysis included the regression model, significance levels, and determination coefficients, providing empirical evidence to evaluate the hypotheses and assess the theoretical assumptions underlying the research framework. Overall, the methodological procedures employed ensured that the study was conducted systematically, resulting in valid, reliable findings that aligned with the research objectives.

Expanding on the previously outlined methodology and variable conceptualization the cinstruct of academic resilience (Y) assumes grester significance within the context of the institutional transformation encountered by undergraduate students. Prior analyses have shown that students undergoing administrative restructuring, digitalization of academic services, and shifts in learning systems face heightened academic and emotional pressures. This situation highlights the importance of academic resilience as a more comprehensive skill, not just the ability to

bounce back from setbacks, but also the ability to continuously function, adjust, and remain involved during continuous organizational changes.

Three interrelated, perseverance, reflective, and adaptive help-seeking, and negative affect and emotional response, are used in this study to define academic resilience. Student internal psychological resources play a major role in these dimensions. Additionally, prior research has shown a strong correlation between increased academic stress, maladaptive coping, decreased adaptability, and deficiencies in emotion regulation, one of the most prevalent vulnerabilities among college students. This emphasizes how important it is to look at how internal elements support students in navigating changing learning environments.

Emotional intelligence (X1) is crucial in this framework. It enables students to identify emotional cues linked to academic uncertainty, manage distress, and reinterpret challenges in constructive ways. The protective role of emotional intelligence during times of transition is further highlighted by preliminary findings from this study, which show that students have strong emotional self-awareness but relatively poor emotional regulation. These findings corroborate H2, which claims that academic resilience (Y) is greatly increased by emotional intelligence.

In a similar vein, self-leadership (X2) helps students stay motivated and on course during institutional change. As universities implement more independent and technology-driven academic systems, students are required to self-regulate their study approaches, sustain intrinsic motivation, and utilize adaptive cognitive strategies. Self-leadership practices, such as self-goal setting, self-reward, self-punishment, self-observation, and self-cueing, provide students with practical tools to stay organized and persistent even when academic procedures become less predictable. Consistent empirical evidence shows that these self-influencing strategies promote engagement and resilience, supporting H3, which posits that self-leadership significantly influences academic resilience (Y). Taken together, these findings provide more theoretical support for investigating emotional intelligence and self-leadership as indicators of academic resilience. During times of institutional adjustment, both factors provide internal mechanisms that help mitigate the effects of uncertainty and preserve academic efficacy.

As a result, this study proposes H1, which asserts that academic resilience (Y) is significantly influenced by both self-leadership (X2) and emotional intelligence (X1). In addition to highlighting the significance of developing psychological competencies in students, this integrated relationship gives higher education institutions a strategic foundation for creating focused support programs meant to improve academic perseverance, emotional stability, and adaptability in the face of ongoing organizational change.

Consequently, the theoretical relationships outlined above form the basis for the hypotheses proposed in this study. These hypotheses summarize the expected influence of both emotional intelligence and self-leadership on students' academic resilience within the context of ongoing institutional change. The conclusions of this framework are as follows:

H1: Emotional Intelligence (X1) and Self-Leadership (X2) simultaneously have a significant effect on Academic Resilience (Y).
H2: Emotional Intelligence (X1) has a significant positive effect on Academic Resilience (Y).
H3: Self-Leadership (X2) has a significant positive effect on Academic Resilience (Y).

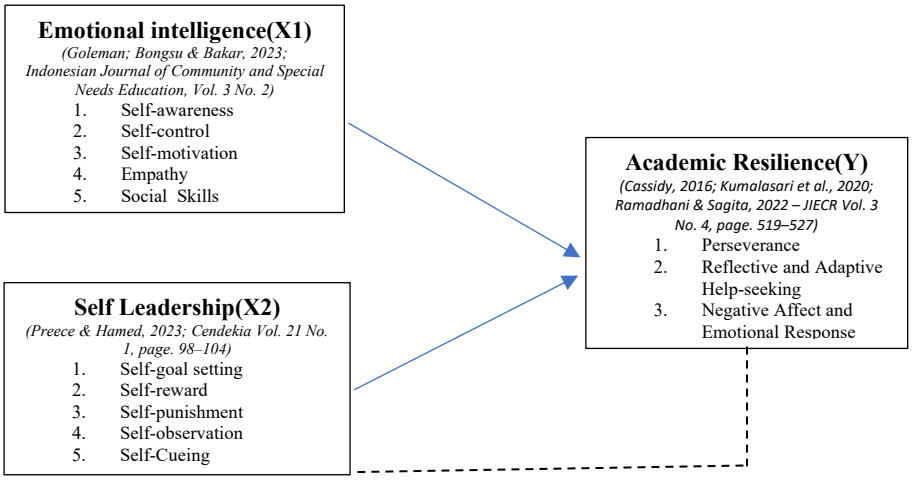

Figure 1. Research Model

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analisys

The descriptive statistics for Emotional Intelligence (X1) are shown in Table 1**.** Indicator X1.1 has the highest mean (M = 4.3684), indicating that students possess strong emotional self-awareness during institutional transformation. A

high mean score signifies that most respondents consistently agreed with statements related to this indicator, suggesting a stable and meaningful pattern rather than random variation (Koo & Yang, 2025).

In contrast, X1.5 has the lowest mean (M = 3.5439), which reflects comparatively weaker emotional regulation under academic pressure. A low mean does not imply insignificance but indicates that students' responses are more varied and the tendency toward agreement is weaker.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Emotional Intelligence (X1)

Indicator	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
X1.1	57	4.3684	.72288	Highest
X1.5	57	3.5439	.88782	Lowest
Valid N (listwise): 57				

Table 2 presents the descriptive results for Self-Leadership (X2). Indicator X2.4 has the highest mean (M = 4.4035), indicating strong internal motivation supported by self-reward strategies. A consistently high mean suggests that these behaviors are widely practiced among students and not due to random response patterns.

Indicator X2.12 has the lowest mean (M = 3.1754). This score shows that self-cueing strategies such as reminders, checklists, or cue cards are less frequently used. The wider standard deviation indicates greater response variability.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Self-Leadership (X2)

Indicator	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
X2.4	57	4.4035	.75261	Highest
X2.12	57	3.1754	.96590	Lowest
Valid N (listwise): 57				

The results in Table 3 show that indicator Y.4 (M = 4.1930) has the highest mean, indicating strong student perseverance during academic challenges. A mean above 4.0 signifies consistent high agreement, demonstrating significant behavioral tendencies among respondents.

Indicator Y.7 has the lowest mean (M = 3.8421), indicating that emotional control under pressure is the weakest resilience component. Since the mean remains above 3.5, student resilience remains relatively strong, though less dominant in this dimension.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics Academic Resilience (Y)

Indicator	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Y.4	57	4.1930	.74255	Highest
Y.7	57	3.8421	.95971	Lowest
Valid N (listwise): 57				

The simultaneous effect of X1 and X2 on Y is presented in Table 4**.** The F-value of 87.705 with $p < .001$ indicates that the model is highly significant statistically**.** A p-value below .05 means the probability that these results occur by chance is less than 5%, and in this case, less than 0.1%, making the effect robust and dependable.

Table 4. Simultaneous Test Result (F) (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1115.479	2	557.739	87.705	< .001
Residual	343.399	54	6.359		
Total	1458.877	56			

The partial test results in Table 5 show:

a. Emotional Intelligence (X1): $t = 5.033$, $p < .001$
b. Self-Leadership (X2): $t = 3.230$, $p = .002$

Because both values are lower than the significance threshold ($\alpha = .05$), the results are statistically significant. This means the likelihood that these relationships happened randomly is extremely small (<0.1% for X1 and 0.2% for X2). Thus, both predictors genuinely influence Academic Resilience.

Table 5. Partial Test Result (T) (Coefficients)

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	- 2.244	2.601	—	-.863	.392
Emotional Intelligence (X1)	.482	.096	.559	5.033	<.001
Self-Leadership (X2)	.259	.080	.359	3.230	.002

Table 6 shows that the R Square value is 0.765, meaning that Emotional Intelligence and Self-Leadership explain 76.5% of the variance in Academic Resilience. This value, which exceeds 0.70, indicates strong model

significance and high explanatory power. The remaining 23.5% is influenced by factors outside this model. The Adjusted R Square of 0.756 further confirms that the model remains robust after accounting for the number of predictors.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test Result (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874	.765	.756	2.522

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence that both Emotional Intelligence and Self-Leadership significantly influence Academic Resilience among students experiencing institutional transformation. The significance values obtained ($p < .001$ for X1 and $p = .002$ for X2) indicate that the relationships identified in the regression analysis are highly reliable and did not occur by chance (Wang et al., 2019). A deeper interpretation of these results reveals important psychological mechanisms that explain why these variables play a critical role in shaping resilience during periods of academic instability.

The significant effect of Emotional Intelligence (X1) on Academic Resilience suggests that students' ability to understand and manage their emotional states directly enhances their capacity to cope with structural disruptions. Institutional transformation often involves sudden changes in academic policies, learning procedures, and digital systems (K. Antonopoulou et al., 2023). Such changes can create feelings of uncertainty, frustration, or decreased control (Khaw et al., 2023). Students with high emotional intelligence are better at recognizing these emotional responses and regulating them through adaptive strategies, such as reframing challenges, expressing emotions appropriately, and seeking timely help (Maharaj & Ramsaroop, 2024). These emotional regulation abilities prevent stress escalation, allowing students to stay focused, make rational decisions, and persist through academic difficulties (Assistant Professor, Post- Graduate Department of Psychology, Bishop Cotton Womens Christian College, Bangalore, India. et al., 2025). Thus, the significant coefficient of X1 in this study reflects a strong psychological foundation where emotional clarity and emotional management serve as buffers against the negative impact of institutional change.

More specifically, the descriptive results showed that emotional self-awareness (X1.1) had the highest mean score, indicating that students generally understand their emotional reactions well. This aligns with the regression results because self-awareness is often the first component needed to regulate emotions effectively (Abdel Hadi & Gharaibeh, 2023). When students can identify what they feel and why they feel it, they can respond constructively instead of impulsively (Ahmed, 2024). In contrast, emotional regulation under pressure (X1.5), which had the lowest mean, explains why some students may still struggle despite being aware of their emotions. This gap between emotional understanding and emotional control highlights an important implication: strengthening emotion-regulation skills may further enhance resilience levels (Mohite & Bhansali, n.d.).

The significant effect of Self-Leadership (X2) on Academic Resilience provides additional insight into how internal strategies shape students' adaptability. Self-leadership emphasizes intentional self-regulation of thoughts, behaviors, and motivation (Woods et al., 2023). Students with strong self-leadership are better at planning their academic tasks, maintaining personal discipline, and motivating themselves during periods of uncertainty (Bjerke, 2024). The significant t-value ($t = 3.230$) reflects that these behaviors, especially personal goal-setting and constructive thinking, serve as stabilizing mechanisms when institutional transformation disrupts normal routines. Instead of waiting for external direction, self-leading students take initiative to reorganize schedules, revise goals, and adjust study plans, which ultimately maintains their academic stability (Saad et al., 2024).

The descriptive findings reinforce this interpretation: self-reward motivation (X2.4) was the strongest dimension, suggesting that students naturally motivate themselves through internal reinforcement. Meanwhile, the lowest mean for self-cueing strategies (X2.12) indicates that students may lack structured self-reminder tools, which could be important for managing multiple academic adjustments (Öztaş et al., 2024). Together, these findings emphasize that while students are highly motivated internally, they may need more structured behavioral strategies to support their resilience effectively.

When Emotional Intelligence and Self-Leadership are combined, they explain 76.5% of the variance in Academic Resilience, which is remarkably high. This suggests not only statistical significance but also practical significance. The combination of emotional regulation and self-regulation creates a robust psychological framework that allows students to withstand academic challenges. Emotional Intelligence provides the stability needed to manage stress, while Self-Leadership provides direction and behavioral consistency (H. Antonopoulou, 2024). During institutional transformation characterized by shifts in administrative systems, policy updates, and digital changes students require both emotional balance and behavioral autonomy. The high R Square indicates that these two abilities are central to navigating the uncertainties and demands of such transformations.

The remaining 23.5% of variance indicates that other factors may also influence resilience, such as social support, learning environment quality, personal stress tolerance, or academic self-efficacy. Identifying these additional variables provides potential avenues for future research.

Overall, the significance and strength of both predictors demonstrate that resilience is not merely a reactionary trait but a psychological capability shaped by emotional and self-regulatory processes. This study contributes to the existing literature by confirming that the combined roles of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Leadership are particularly pronounced in environments undergoing institutional change—an area that previous research has not explored extensively. The findings provide theoretical and practical insights, suggesting that interventions aimed at strengthening emotional regulation and self-management may substantially improve student resilience in dynamic academic contexts.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that emotional intelligence and self-leadership play a significant role in strengthening academic resilience among students undergoing institutional transformation at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Tadulako University. The regression results confirm that both variables positively and significantly predict resilience, explaining 76.5% of the variance. This demonstrates that adaptive capability in the face of structural, administrative, and digital transition is largely driven by internal psychological resources. Theoretically, this study extends the literature on Self-Leadership and Emotional Intelligence by validating their protective roles specifically within the context of macro-level institutional disruption, moving beyond their traditional application in stable learning environments. Practically, the findings highlight that while students possess strong self-awareness and motivation, they require more support in *active* emotional regulation and structured self-management strategies. Future research should expand on these findings by exploring the role of external variables, such as peer support and digital literacy, in multicampus settings to build a comprehensive model of student resilience in the modern university..

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