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Original Article

The Relationship between Academic Stress and Hopelessness among Students

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Abstract. Academic stress is a common psychological burden among senior high school students that, when left unmanaged, may develop into hopelessness. This study examined the level of academic stress, the level of hopelessness, and the relationship between the two among students of SMA Kasih Depok, Indonesia. A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving 117 students selected through simple random sampling from a population of 147. Data were collected using two Likert-scale questionnaires developed by the researchers for this study: a 27-item academic stress scale measuring students' perceived academic pressure and a 22-item hopelessness scale assessing negative expectations about the future. Because the academic stress scores were not normally distributed, Spearman's rho was used to test the hypothesis. The results showed that academic stress was predominantly in the moderate category (60.7%), while hopelessness was predominantly in the low category (47.9%). The correlation analysis revealed a significant, moderate, positive relationship between academic stress and hopelessness ($r_s = .533, p < .001, N = 117$), indicating that higher levels of academic stress were associated with higher levels of hopelessness. These findings highlight the importance of preventive and curative guidance and counseling services in helping students manage academic pressure adaptively before it develops into hopelessness.

Keywords: Academic Stress; Hopelessness; Senior High School Students

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Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental period marked by heightened vulnerability to mental health problems, and this vulnerability is increasingly visible in school settings. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) reports that approximately one in seven adolescents worldwide experiences a mental disorder, with depressive disorders ranking among the leading causes of illness and disability for individuals aged 15 to 19 years. One psychological state closely tied to depressive symptoms is hopelessness, a pervasive negative expectation about the future accompanied by a sense of powerlessness to change one's circumstances. Cross-national evidence supports the seriousness of this concern: a multi-country study across 15 Asian countries found that hopelessness was positively associated with both depression risk and suicidal ideation among adolescents (Lim, 2024).

In Indonesia, mental health problems among adolescents are far from negligible. Kementerian Kesehatan Indonesia, (2023) reported that approximately 5.5% of Indonesian adolescents experience emotional mental disorders, while the Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS, 2022) found that 34.9% of Indonesian adolescents had experienced at least one mental health problem within the past year. Academic demands are frequently implicated as a contributing factor. Febriani & Minarsi, (2021) found that nearly half (44.9%) of the senior

high school students they studied fell into the moderate academic stress category, while Rosanti et al. (2022) reported that students experiencing high academic stress showed a 42% decline in learning motivation compared with their low-stress peers. When prolonged, this pressure does not remain confined to the academic domain, Zhang et al., (2022) noted that sustained academic stress can trigger emotional symptoms, including hopelessness, among students. Consistent with this, Barseli et al., (2018) documented a significant negative relationship between academic stress and learning outcomes ($r = -.524$, $p < .05$), with 68% of their respondents reporting frequent tension, anxiety, and loss of focus when facing academic demands. Academic demands are, however, only one of several psychosocial stressors known to affect Indonesian adolescents' mental health; related stressors such as body shaming have likewise been shown to carry adverse mental health consequences for this age group Luthfiah & Syahputra, (2026), suggesting that today's students often navigate multiple, potentially compounding sources of psychological strain.

These broader patterns were also visible in the field setting of the present study. Guidance and counseling (BK) teachers at SMA Kasih Depok observed a growing number of students displaying signs of emotional exhaustion, such as reduced enthusiasm in class, withdrawal from social interaction, and visible anxiety when facing assignments or evaluations. In preliminary, informal conversations that the researcher conducted with BK teachers and a number of students prior to the formal study, more than 40% of the students approached reported difficulty concentrating, anxiety before examinations, and doubt about achieving their target grades; several students explicitly described feeling unmotivated because they kept failing to meet academic expectations, a statement consistent with early indicators of academic hopelessness (Nathania et al., 2025). This preliminary fieldwork was exploratory and informal, distinct from the formal sampling procedure described in the Method section, and is reported here only to motivate the research problem rather than as formally collected data. These observations align with theoretical accounts identifying stress as a strong predictor of hopelessness-related psychological disturbance, with hopelessness itself acting as a mediator between psychological distress and maladaptive responses that, in more severe cases, can extend to self-harm behavior (Lew et al., 2019; Rahayu, 2023; Syahputra et al., 2026).

Despite this convergence of evidence, most empirical work linking academic stress to hopelessness has been conducted with university students rather than senior high school students. Khairunnisa, (2018), for example, found hopelessness to be significantly and positively related to suicidal ideation among university students ($r = .689$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .475$), with low social support associated with higher hopelessness scores. Comparatively little research has examined the academic stress–hopelessness relationship directly among Indonesian senior high school students, particularly within private urban schools such as those in Depok, where academic competition can be intense. This gap is important to address because senior high school represents a formative period in which maladaptive responses to academic pressure, if left unaddressed, may consolidate into more entrenched patterns of hopelessness carried into later developmental stages. While a positive association between academic stress and psychological difficulty is broadly expected from the adult and university literature, the specific contribution of the present study is context-specific empirical evidence, using instruments and a population not previously examined together in this literature, that can ground BK program design in Indonesian senior high schools rather than requiring practitioners to extrapolate from research conducted with other age groups or in other cultural contexts.

Within the Indonesian education system, guidance and counseling (Bimbingan dan Konseling, or BK) teachers are formally responsible for supporting students' personal, social, learning, and career development, including early identification of psychological difficulties that may interfere with students' wellbeing and academic functioning. Understanding how academic stress relates to hopelessness is therefore directly relevant to BK practice: it clarifies whether efforts to reduce academic stress can reasonably be expected to also reduce the risk of hopelessness, and it identifies a specific, actionable target, namely students' appraisal of and

coping with academic demands, around which preventive and curative BK services can be organized. Without empirical clarity on this relationship at the senior high school level, BK teachers are left to design such services based largely on assumptions drawn from research on other age groups or other cultural contexts.

Based on this background, the present study aimed to (a) determine the level of academic stress experienced by students of SMA Kasih Depok, (b) determine their level of hopelessness, and (c) examine whether a significant relationship exists between academic stress and hopelessness. It was hypothesized that academic stress would be significantly and positively related to hopelessness. The findings are expected to provide an empirical foundation for guidance and counseling teachers in designing services that help students manage academic stress adaptively and thereby prevent the development of hopelessness

Method

Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design (Sugiyono, 2013). A correlational design is a non-experimental method used to determine the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. This design was chosen to analyze the extent to which academic stress is associated with hopelessness among students of SMA Kasih Depok; because the design is correlational rather than predictive or experimental, academic stress and hopelessness are treated here as associated variables rather than as independent and dependent variables in a causal or predictive sense.

Participants

The study was conducted at SMA Kasih Depok, a private senior high school located on Jalan Pemuda No. 59, Pancoran Mas, Depok, West Java, beginning in October 2025. The school was established on 1 August 1983 and has held national accreditation status A since 2021 (Accreditation Decree No. 1347/BAN-SM/SK/2021), operating under the Ministry of Education and Culture and managed by Yayasan Lembaga Cornelis Chastelein (YLCC). The population comprised all 147 students enrolled across seven classes (Grade X.1, X.2, XI Social Science 1, XI Social Science 2, XI Natural Science, XII Social Science, and XII Natural Science), with 21 students in each class. The minimum sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. With $N = 147$ and $e = .05$, this formula yielded a minimum required sample of approximately 107 students. Slovin's formula provides a heuristic minimum based on population size and margin of error alone; it does not incorporate an expected effect size or a target level of statistical power for correlational hypothesis testing, and no a priori power analysis was conducted, which is acknowledged as a limitation below. Participants were selected through simple random sampling, in which every one of the 147 students across the seven classes described above constituted the sampling frame and had an equal chance of selection regardless of class or grade level; no stratification by class or grade was applied (Sugiyono, 2013). The original study did not report the specific randomization procedure, the exact invitation process, or a formal accounting of students who were approached but did not respond; this gap in procedural reporting is acknowledged as a limitation below. During data collection, 117 valid responses were obtained, exceeding the minimum requirement; all 117 responses were therefore retained for analysis.

Materials and Apparatus

Data were collected using two closed-ended, four-point Likert-scale questionnaires (scored 1 to 4, with unfavorable items reverse-scored) distributed online via Google Form.

Academic Stress Scale. This 27-item scale was newly developed by the researcher for this study; it is not a translation or adaptation of Bedewy & Gabriel, (2015) published Perception of Academic Stress Scale, but its items were written by the researcher to operationalize three conceptual aspects drawn from Bedewy & Gabriel, (2015) framework: academic pressure, task and examination burden, and perception of self-ability. The scale originally comprised 29 items (15 favorable, 14 unfavorable). Item-total correlation testing ($r\text{-table} = .180$) identified two items as invalid ($r = .110$ and $r = .151$); the remaining 27 valid items were retained for analysis. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded a coefficient of .832, indicating that the scale was internally consistent in this sample (Azizah & Chalimatusadiah, 2025). Content validity rested on the item-writing process described above; a formal expert-panel content review and construct validation such as factor analysis were not conducted, which is acknowledged as a limitation below (Syahputra et al., 2025).

Hopelessness Scale. This 22-item scale was likewise newly developed by the researcher for this study. Marchetti et al., (2023) provide a theoretical account of hopelessness rather than a published measurement instrument; the researcher used their three-component conceptualization, dismal expectations (negative expectations regarding the future), blocked goal-directed processing (the perception that effort toward one's goals is obstructed), and perceived hopelessness (the belief that one lacks the control, ability, or resources to change one's circumstances), as the conceptual basis for item-writing. The scale comprised 22 items (14 favorable, 8 unfavorable), all of which were found valid ($r\text{-table} = .180$). Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .866, indicating good internal consistency in this sample. As with the academic stress scale, content validity rested on the item-writing process rather than formal expert-panel review, and construct validation such as factor analysis was not conducted, which is acknowledged as a limitation below.

Procedures

Data collection was carried out by distributing the two questionnaires as a single online form to students who met the sampling criteria. Item validity and reliability were established using the full collected dataset ($N = 117$) with the aid of IBM SPSS Statistics version 22, prior to proceeding to descriptive and inferential analysis. Because the same dataset was used both to establish item validity and reliability and for the substantive hypothesis test, the reported psychometric properties may partly capitalize on sample-specific characteristics; they should be read as internal-consistency evidence for this sample rather than as general validation of the instruments, a limitation discussed further below.

Design or Data Analysis

Data were analyzed descriptively to determine the distribution of academic stress and hopelessness scores, followed by categorization into five levels (very high, high, moderate, low, very low). Category intervals were obtained by dividing the theoretical range of each valid scale, the difference between its theoretical maximum and minimum possible scores, into five equal-width bands. This categorical summary is reported alongside, rather than instead of, the continuous scores in Table 1, to give a readily interpretable distributional overview for BK practitioners; the correlational hypothesis test itself was conducted on the continuous scores. Prior to hypothesis testing, the distribution of each variable was examined using the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Because academic stress scores were not normally distributed,

Spearman's rank-order correlation (Spearman's rho) was used instead of Pearson product-moment correlation (Sugiyono, 2013). Unlike Pearson's r , Spearman's rho does not itself require normally distributed data; its relevant assumption is a monotonic, rather than strictly linear, relationship between the two variables. An ANOVA-based linearity test was additionally conducted and is reported alongside the normality test in Table 4 as descriptive evidence of the shape of the relationship, not as a formal precondition for Spearman's rho. The statistical hypotheses were formulated as $H_0: \rho = 0$ (no relationship between academic stress and hopelessness) and $H_a: \rho \neq 0$ (a relationship exists between academic stress and hopelessness).

Results and Discussions

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 117 students participated in this study. Descriptive statistics for the academic stress and hopelessness variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Academic Stress and Hopelessness

Variable	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Academic Stress	117	52	41	93	63.75	8.97
Hopelessness	117	41	26	67	46.57	8.27

Academic stress scores ranged from 41 to 93 ($M = 63.75$, $SD = 8.97$), while hopelessness scores ranged from 26 to 67 ($M = 46.57$, $SD = 8.27$). Both variables were further categorized into five levels using class intervals calculated from the theoretical score range of each valid scale, as presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Categorization of Academic Stress Scores

Interval	Category	f	%
93–108	Very High	1	0.9
77–92	High	8	6.8
61–76	Moderate	71	60.7
45–60	Low	36	30.8
27–44	Very Low	1	0.9
Total		117	100

As shown in Table 2, the majority of students (60.7%, $n = 71$) experienced a moderate level of academic stress, followed by a low level (30.8%, $n = 36$). Only a small proportion of students fell into the high (6.8%) or very high/very low (0.9% each) categories.

Table 3. Categorization of Hopelessness Scores

Interval	Category	f	%
75–88	Very High	0	0.0
61–74	High	4	3.4
47–60	Moderate	53	45.3
33–46	Low	56	47.9
22–32	Very Low	4	3.4
Total		117	100

As shown in Table 3, the majority of students (47.9%, $n = 56$) reported a low level of hopelessness, closely followed by a moderate level (45.3%, $n = 53$); very few students fell into the high (3.4%) or very low (3.4%) categories, and none fell into the very high category.

Prerequisite Tests

Before hypothesis testing, the distribution of each variable and the shape of their relationship were examined, as summarized in Table 4. The one-sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test indicated that academic stress scores were not normally distributed ($p = .048 < .05$), whereas hopelessness scores were normally distributed ($p = .200 > .05$). Spearman's rho was therefore used for hypothesis testing instead of Pearson product-moment correlation; Spearman's rho does not itself require normally distributed data, and its relevant assumption is a monotonic relationship between the two variables. An ANOVA-based linearity test showed no significant deviation from linearity ($p = .705 > .05$) together with a significant linearity term ($p < .001$).

Table 4. Summary of Normality and Linearity Test Results

Test	Statistic	p	Result
Normality – Academic Stress	D = 0.083	.048	Not normally distributed
Normality – Hopelessness	D = 0.059	.200	Normally distributed
Linearity – Deviation from Linearity	F = 0.84	.705	Linear
Linearity – Linearity term	F = 65.25	< .001	Significant

Hypothesis Testing.

The relationship between academic stress and hopelessness was tested using Spearman's rank-order correlation, with results summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Spearman's Rho Correlation between Academic Stress and Hopelessness

Statistic	Value
Correlation coefficient (rs)	.533**
Significance, p (2-tailed)	< .001
N	117

The Spearman correlation analysis yielded a coefficient of $r_s = .533$ ($p < .001$, $N = 117$), indicating a statistically significant relationship between academic stress and hopelessness. Following common strength-of-relationship criteria, in which coefficients between .40 and .59 indicate a moderate relationship, this result reflects a moderate positive relationship: the higher the academic stress experienced by students, the higher their level of hopelessness. Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected.

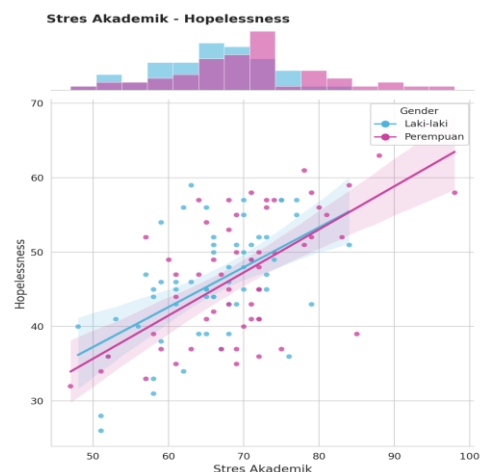


Figure 1. Scatter Plot of Academic Stress and Hopelessness Scores by Gender, with Regression Lines and Marginal Distributions

Figure 1 presents an exploratory scatter plot of academic stress and hopelessness scores, disaggregated by gender for descriptive purposes only; a regression line and its 95% confidence band are shown separately for male and female students purely as a visual summary of each subgroup's pattern, not as evidence of a formally tested gender difference. The plot visually corroborates the overall positive relationship reported in Table 5: as students' academic stress scores increase, their hopelessness scores tend to increase as well. Because gender was not analyzed as a moderating variable in this study, the visual similarity between the male and female regression lines should be read descriptively rather than as evidence that the association does not differ by gender.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that academic stress among students of SMA Kasih Depok was predominantly moderate, while hopelessness was predominantly low, and that the two variables were significantly and positively related at a moderate strength ($r_s = .533$, $p < .001$). This pattern indicates that higher academic stress was associated with higher hopelessness among students in this sample.

This finding is consistent with the theoretical account proposed by [Bedewy & Gabriel, \(2015\)](#), who conceptualized academic stress as arising when individuals perceive academic demands as exceeding their capacity to cope. Within the present sample, students who felt burdened by assignments, examinations, grade demands, time constraints, and environmental academic expectations were more likely to experience the psychological strain captured by higher academic stress scores. This aligns with the finding that academic stress was positively associated with hopelessness: when students appraised academic demands as difficult to control, they were more prone to feelings of inadequacy, pessimism, and diminished hope for academic success.

The finding is likewise consistent with [Marchetti et al., \(2023\)](#) conceptualization of hopelessness as comprising three interrelated components: dismal expectations (a tendency toward negative expectations about the future), blocked goal-directed processing (the perception that effort toward one's goals is futile or obstructed), and perceived hopelessness (the belief that one lacks control or resources to change one's circumstances). The stronger a student's negative expectations, perceived obstruction, and sense of powerlessness, the higher the resulting hopelessness score. Considered together, these two frameworks suggest a plausible pathway: prolonged academic pressure, compounded by heavy workloads, high grade expectations, and low confidence in one's own ability, can foster a negative outlook toward one's academic future, a sense that effort is futile, and ultimately a sense of powerlessness in the face of academic demands.

At the construct level, this pattern is conceptually consistent with the composition of both scales, though the present study did not analyze item-level statistics and the following comparisons should be read as contextual rather than as a direct test of which items or tasks drive the association. The academic stress scale was built around three conceptual aspects, academic pressure, task and examination burden, and perception of self-ability, each of which reflects a distinct way that academic demands can exceed a student's felt capacity to cope ([Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015](#)). This is broadly consistent with evidence that specific academic tasks, such as scientific writing, are themselves a notable source of anxiety among Indonesian students, particularly those with limited prior writing experience ([Syahputra et al., 2022](#)). Correspondingly, the hopelessness scale was built around dismal expectations, blocked goal-directed processing, and perceived hopelessness [Marchetti et al., \(2023\)](#) sustained academic pressure without adequate coping capacity is conceptually consistent with elevated scores on

these components, although this study did not conduct component-level analyses to test this directly.

These findings should be situated within two related bodies of evidence: direct evidence on the academic stress–hopelessness relationship itself, and indirect evidence involving conceptually related but distinct constructs such as depression, anxiety, and help-seeking. Direct evidence is more limited. Zhang et al., (2022), studying Chinese college students, found a significant positive relationship between academic stress and hopelessness itself ($r = .287, p < .01$), providing the closest direct comparison for the present finding. The remaining studies below provide indirect, related evidence rather than direct replications of a stress–hopelessness link. Azizah et al., (2023) found a positive relationship between academic stress and depressive tendencies, not hopelessness, among nursing students at Universitas Gadjah Mada ($r = .597, p < .001$). Clauriesa & Giyaningtyas, (2026) reported a similar positive relationship between academic stress and depression, again a related but distinct construct, among health science students ($r = .423, p < .001$). Kibtiyah et al., (2025) found academic stress to be positively related to both depression ($r = .701, p < .01$) and anxiety ($r = .690, p < .01$) among university students; because depression and anxiety are conceptually related to, but not equivalent to, hopelessness, these findings are best read as indirect support consistent with the dismal-expectations and perceived-hopelessness components described by Marchetti et al., (2023), rather than as direct evidence on hopelessness itself. Among senior high school students specifically, Widodo et al., (2026) found academic stress, perfectionism, and fear of missing out to be significantly related to depressive symptoms, not hopelessness, among students at SMAN 4 Mataram ($p = .001$); this indirect evidence nonetheless reinforces that academic-stress-related psychological difficulty is not unique to university populations.

Further indirect evidence, again involving related but distinct constructs rather than hopelessness itself, helps illuminate possible boundary conditions of this relationship. Marseal, (2024) found academic stress to be positively related to help-seeking behavior among final-year university students ($r = .258, p < .01$), suggesting that academic pressure can motivate adaptive responses as well as maladaptive ones, depending on the psychological resources available to the individual. Similarly, Fajri & Nurhidaya, (2025) found that emotional intelligence ($r = -.335, p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($r = -.630, p < .001$) were both negatively related to academic stress, while Putri et al., (2024) found self-esteem to be negatively related to academic stress ($r = -.385, p < .001$). Together, these findings raise the possibility that internal resources, such as confidence in one's own ability, emotional regulation, and self-worth, may buffer the extent to which academic pressure translates into psychological strain; the present study did not measure these resources and cannot confirm whether they account for the variation observed here. Lazulfa et al., (2024) offer a further, indirect nuance: academic stress was significantly related to depressive symptoms ($p = .001$) but not to suicidal ideation ($p = .231$) in their sample. Because that study examined depression and suicidal ideation rather than hopelessness, this pattern is only suggestive, not direct evidence, regarding how academic stress relates to more versus less proximal outcomes; it is noted here as a direction for future hopelessness-specific research rather than a finding of the present study.

Taken together, these converging findings support the conceptual framework underlying this study: academic stress that is not managed adaptively can erode students' confidence in their own ability, foster negative expectations regarding their academic future, and cultivate a sense of powerlessness, all of which are core features of hopelessness. At the same time, the moderate, rather than strong, size of the correlation observed here, together with the finding that hopelessness itself was predominantly low despite moderate academic stress, indicates that academic stress alone does not fully account for hopelessness. Protective factors outside the scope of this study, such as social support, self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-acceptance, resilience, coping ability, and future orientation, likely also play a substantial role (Fadhillah et al., 2026; Fillah et al., 2026; Hamilton et al., 2016; Putri & Purnamasari, 2024; Wanda, 2024),

consistent with the conceptual framework guiding this study, in which social support was proposed as a factor that may buffer the effect of academic stress on hopelessness.

One possible, though untested, contextual explanation is that private senior high schools such as SMA Kasih Depok involve academic competitiveness, parental expectations, and structured extracurricular demands that could compound the pressure students already face from coursework and examinations, potentially leaving students fewer opportunities to recover psychologically between periods of academic demand. None of these contextual factors, competitiveness, parental expectations, extracurricular load, or recovery opportunity, were measured in this study, so this explanation should be read as a hypothesis for future research rather than a finding; it is offered only as one possible account of why a meaningful minority of students in this study still reported moderate-to-high hopelessness despite an overall low mean score.

Given that academic stress was predominantly moderate and significantly related to hopelessness, these findings carry implications for school-based guidance and counseling (BK) services, particularly in the personal and academic domains; because the present study did not test any intervention, the suggestions below are offered as evidence-informed implications grounded in the broader counseling and school-mental-health literature, not as recommendations validated by this study's data. Several service formats appear especially relevant. Classical guidance services can be used to deliver psychoeducation on academic stress management and future-oriented optimism to entire classes, consistent with evidence that school-based prevention programs can reduce depression and anxiety symptoms in young people (Werner-Seidler et al., 2017). Group counseling services, employing techniques such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), positive self-talk, relaxation, and structured problem-solving, can support students experiencing high academic stress or examination anxiety; a randomized controlled trial of a CBT-based stress-reduction program delivered to students in their final year of high school found it reduced academic stress (Lowe & Wuthrich, 2021), and a systematic review of academic stress interventions in high schools similarly supports CBT-based and skills-based approaches at this level (Jagiello et al., 2025). Individual counseling services, using techniques such as cognitive restructuring and stress-coping management, can be reserved for students showing more pronounced signs of hopelessness, helping them consider more realistic and constructive alternatives to thoughts such as *"I am bound to fail."* Complementing these direct services, information services and content-mastery sessions, covering topics such as healthy study habits, time management, and simple relaxation techniques, can help students recognize early signs of excessive academic stress and build practical coping skills. Taken together, and pending direct evaluation within the BK context described here, this range of preventive and curative services offers a reasonable, literature-informed starting point for BK teachers seeking to address the psychological costs of academic pressure.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the correlational design used here can establish the existence and strength of an association between academic stress and hopelessness but cannot establish a causal relationship between them; academic stress and hopelessness are accordingly best understood as associated variables rather than as independent and dependent variables in a predictive sense. Second, the study examined only a single predictor, academic stress, in relation to hopelessness, without accounting for other factors that plausibly contribute to hopelessness, such as social support, self-efficacy, resilience, family circumstances, or parenting style. Third, both instruments were newly developed by the researcher for this study rather than adapted from existing validated measures; their content validity rested on the item-writing process rather than formal expert-panel review, construct validity was not examined through factor analysis, and item validity and reliability were both established using the same dataset later used for hypothesis testing, which may capitalize on sample-specific characteristics and inflate the apparent psychometric quality of the scales. Fourth, sample-size planning relied on Slovin's formula, which does not

incorporate an expected effect size or a target level of statistical power; no a priori power analysis was conducted, and the original study did not report the specific randomization procedure, invitation process, or nonresponse rate underlying the simple random sampling described in the Method section. Fifth, data were collected using a self-report questionnaire, so responses depended on participants' honesty, emotional state at the time of completion, and understanding of each item; some participants also found the number of items burdensome, raising the possibility of response fatigue. Sixth, data collection took place within a relatively short window dictated by the school's academic schedule, which may have led some students to complete the questionnaire hurriedly. Finally, participants were drawn from a single school, which limits the extent to which these findings can be generalized to senior high school students with different characteristics or in different settings.

Conclusions

This study found a significant, moderate, and positive relationship between academic stress and hopelessness among students of SMA Kasih Depok ($r_s = .533$, $p < .001$): students who reported higher academic stress also tended to report higher hopelessness. Academic stress in this sample was predominantly moderate (60.7%), while hopelessness was predominantly low (47.9%). Students reporting higher academic pressure related to grade demands, heavy workloads, tight deadlines, examination anxiety, and lower confidence in their own ability also tended to report more negative psychological outcomes, including a more negative outlook toward their academic future. As a correlational study, these findings describe an association rather than a demonstrated causal sequence, and should not be read as evidence that academic pressure causes emotional exhaustion or hopelessness.

These findings indicate that students' psychological wellbeing is shaped not only by internal characteristics but also by the academic demands present within the school environment, underscoring the importance of attending to students' mental health as an integral part of the educational process. This study contributes to the field of guidance and counseling by highlighting the value of both preventive and curative efforts, including group counseling, individual counseling, classical guidance on stress management, and coping-skills training, that BK teachers can employ to help students manage academic stress, strengthen self-efficacy, and cultivate a more optimistic outlook toward the future, thereby reducing the likelihood that academic stress develops into hopelessness.

Given that this study was limited to a single school and examined only one predictor of hopelessness, its findings should not be generalized broadly to all senior high school students. Future research is encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples and to incorporate additional variables associated with hopelessness, such as social support, self-efficacy, self-esteem, parenting style, and coping ability, in order to produce a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological factors shaping students' hope for the future.

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