

Psychosocial Work Factors and Academic Performance among Working Professionals: A Public Health Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Background: Long working hours and high job demands are recognized psychosocial risk factors in occupational health. Professionals who pursue graduate education while maintaining full time employment may experience dual role strain, which can affect cognitive functioning and academic performance. This study examined the association between psychosocial work factors and academic performance among occupational health professionals enrolled in graduate education.

Subjects and Method: A cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted among 95 occupational health professionals enrolled in the Master of Applied Occupational Health and Safety program. Variables included weekly working hours, weekly study time, perceived workplace support, family support, resilience, and grade point average (GPA). Data were analyzed using a multiple linear regression.

Results: Participants reported high levels of work exposure, with some experiencing extreme workloads. Workplace support was significantly associated with lower GPA ($b = -0.08$, 95% CI -0.16 to -0.01 , $p = 0.028$), whereas weekly study time showed a positive association with GPA ($b = 0.01$, 95% CI 0.01 – 0.01 , $p = 0.050$). Resilience ($b = -0.01$, 95% CI -0.01 to 0.01 , $p = 0.449$), weekly working hours ($b = -0.01$, 95% CI -0.01 to 0.01 , $p = 0.523$), and family support ($b = -0.01$, 95% CI -0.03 to 0.02 , $p = 0.736$) were not significantly associated with GPA.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that workplace support without meaningful workload adjustment may function as a latent psychosocial risk factor rather than a protective mechanism. Academic performance among working professionals appears to depend more on structural time availability than on perceived support alone. From a public health perspective, alignment between institutional encouragement and actual workload management is essential to safeguard cognitive functioning and academic success.

Keywords: psychosocial work factors, occupational health professionals, long working hours, cognitive performance, academic achievement

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BACKGROUND

Psychosocial work factors, including long working hours, high job demands, and role strain, are recognized occupational health risks (Madsen & Rugulies, 2021). Prolonged exposure to excessive workload may contribute to mental fatigue, stress, impaired concentration, and reduced capacity to perform cognitively demanding tasks (van As et al., 2022; Entezarizarch et al., 2024; Hardy & Hinkin, 2022). From a public health perspective, these psychosocial working conditions are important because their effects may extend beyond occupational well-being and influence workers' ability to perform other demanding roles. Within the Job Demands–Resources framework, high workload and prolonged working hours constitute job demands that require sustained cognitive and psychological effort, particularly when sufficient opportunities for recovery are unavailable (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001).

Professionals who pursue graduate education while maintaining full-time employment experience simultaneous occupational and academic demands. Work responsibilities may compete with coursework, independent study, examinations, and family obligations for the same limited time and energy. Previous studies have linked fatigue and mental workload with reduced functional capacity and burnout among workers, including health professionals (Liu et al., 2022; Skala & Zemková, 2022; Xiong et al., 2024). In working students, this incompatibility may be conceptualized as work school conflict, in which participation in the work role makes it more difficult to fulfil responsibilities in the educational role. Time pressure and inflexible work study boundaries have been associated with greater work school conflict, poorer well-being, and study related burnout (Creed et

al., 2023; Park & Sprung, 2013; Wan et al., 2022). These competing demands may be particularly relevant to graduate students who are established professionals because their employment is a continuing career responsibility rather than temporary student employment.

The Job Demands Resources and Study Demands Resources perspectives provide a useful framework for understanding this dual role context. Weekly working hours represent a quantitative job demand, whereas the time available for academic activities represents an essential study resource. Workplace support and family support may provide external resources, while resilience may function as a personal resource that assists individuals in adapting to competing responsibilities. Demands may consume energy and increase strain, whereas resources may support goal attainment and buffer the adverse consequences of demanding conditions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker & Mostert, 2024; Demerouti et al., 2001). However, the effectiveness of these resources may depend on whether they provide sufficient practical capacity to manage the demands encountered. Consequently, perceived support may not necessarily improve academic outcomes when working hours remain high and protected study time remains limited.

Organizational support is generally expected to reduce strain and facilitate employees' continuing education. Such support may include formal approval to undertake further study, supervisory encouragement, flexible scheduling, or workload adjustment (Galos et al., 2025; Wang & Kee, 2025a; Zhang, 2025; Zhumukova, 2025). Nevertheless, these forms of support are not equivalent. Employees may receive permission or encouragement to pursue graduate education while remaining

responsible for the same working hours, workload, and organizational performance targets. Evidence concerning professionals undertaking postgraduate education suggests that organizational endorsement does not necessarily eliminate difficulties in balancing academic and occupational responsibilities (Borres & Paglinawan, 2025; Carney et al., 2025). Similarly, studies of working students indicate that supportive and flexible work study boundaries may produce more favourable outcomes, whereas inflexible arrangements are associated with greater role conflict and burnout (Creed et al., 2023; Park & Sprung, 2013). It is therefore important to distinguish perceived or administrative support from structural support that meaningfully increases the time and energy available for academic work.

Despite growing research on psychosocial working conditions, mental workload, burnout, and work school conflict, several limitations remain. First, occupational health research has predominantly examined employee well being, burnout, mental health, and job performance rather than objectively documented academic achievement (Madsen & Rugulies, 2021; Wang & Kee, 2025b; Xiong et al., 2024). Second, research on working students has often focused on undergraduate populations whose employment circumstances may differ from those of established professionals undertaking graduate education (Creed et al., 2023; Park & Sprung, 2013; Wan et al., 2022). Third, previous studies have rarely examined time related demands, perceived social resources, and personal resources simultaneously in relation to academic performance. Evidence is particularly limited regarding whether perceived workplace support remains beneficial when organizational encouragement is not accompanied by reduced

workload or protected study time (Borres & Paglinawan, 2025; Carney et al., 2025; Zhang, 2025). This gap is relevant in Indonesia, where many occupational health and safety professionals undertake graduate education while continuing to fulfil substantial professional responsibilities.

The present study addresses these gaps by simultaneously examining weekly working hours, weekly study time, perceived workplace support, family support, and resilience in relation to cumulative Grade Point Average obtained from official academic records. Its novel contribution lies in integrating measurable time allocation, perceived external support, and personal resilience within a single analytical model among occupational health and safety professionals undertaking graduate education while employed. Accordingly, this study aimed to determine the associations of weekly working hours, weekly study time, workplace support, family support, and resilience with academic performance among working occupational health and safety professionals. The findings may inform workplace accommodations and graduate education strategies that provide substantive, rather than merely administrative, support for professionals undertaking further education.

SUBJECTS AND METHOD

1. Study Design

This was a cross-sectional study. Data were collected using an online questionnaire administered to graduate students enrolled in the Master of Applied Occupational Health and Safety Program, Vocational School, Universitas Gadjah Mada. The study focused on occupational health professionals who were simultaneously engaged in full-time employment and graduate-level education.

2. Population and Sample

The study included 95 students enrolled in the Master of Applied Occupational Health and Safety Program, Vocational School, Universitas Gadjah Mada. All participants were actively employed in occupational health-related positions during the study period. Participants worked across various occupational sectors, including mining, healthcare facilities, manufacturing industries, corporate offices, and other occupational health settings. The eligibility criteria were: active enrollment in the MTR K3 graduate program, and current employment in an occupational health-related position.

3. Study Variables

The dependent variable was academic performance, measured by cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). Independent variables included resilience, weekly working hours, weekly study time, workplace support, family support, years of professional experience, age, gender, and marital status.

4. Operational Definition of Variables

Academic performance was defined as participants' overall academic achievement during their graduate study, assessed using cumulative GPA obtained from official academic records, ranging from 0.00 to 4.00, with higher scores indicating better academic achievement.

Resilience defined as an individual's ability to adapt positively and recover from stress or adversity. It was measured using the Indonesian validated version of the 8-item Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). Total scores ranged from 0 to 32, with higher scores indicating greater resilience. Resilience was categorized as low (0–10), moderate (11–21), and high (22–32).

Work exposure was defined as the intensity of occupational demands experienced by participants and was opera-

tionalized using weekly working hours (continuous variable). Professional experience referred to the total number of years participants had worked in occupational health-related positions. Weekly study time (hours/week) was defined as the average number of hours spent on academic activities outside formal working hours.

Perceived workplace support and family support was defined as participants' perception of receiving formal or informal support from their employer to undertake graduate education and was measured using self-reported binary responses (Yes = 1; No = 0).

Family support was defined as participants' perception of receiving emotional, practical, or motivational support from family members while undertaking graduate education and was measured using a self-reported binary response (Yes = 1; No = 0).

Sociodemographic characteristics included participants' age, gender, and marital status. Age was classified according to the World Health Organization adult age group classification.

5. Study Instruments

Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire. Academic performance data (GPA) were obtained from official academic records. Resilience was assessed using the Indonesian validated version of the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), adapted from the original 10-item instrument, with eight retained items. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The Indonesian version demonstrated good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 and an intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) of 0.77 (Primasari et al., 2022). Information on working hours, study time, workplace support, family support, professional experience,

and sociodemographic characteristics was collected through self-report.

6. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using Jamovi version 2.7. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were used to summarize participant characteristics and study variables. Normality of GPA distribution was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk test, which indicated a non-normal distribution ($W = 0.93$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Spearman's rank-order correlation was performed to examine bivariate associations between GPA and the independent variables. Variables were subsequently entered into a multiple linear regression model to identify independent predictors of academic performance. Model assumptions were evaluated before interpretation. Statistical significance was established at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed).

7. Research Ethics

This study received ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Sebelas Ma-

ret (No. 91/UN27.06.11/KEP/EC/2025) granted on 18 June 2025. All procedures complied with the Declaration of Helsinki. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participant confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing all data and storing research records securely.

RESULTS

1. Sample Characteristics

The mean weekly working time was 47.2 hours. Some participants reported extreme workloads of up to 96 hours per week, indicating substantial occupational exposure. The average study time was 11.7 hours per week. Most participants reported receiving administrative support from their workplace (90.5%). However, workload levels remained high despite this support. The mean GPA was 3.83 (SD = 0.109), reflecting consistently high academic achievement. Most participants (92.6%) had high resilience scores.

Table 1. Demographic Profile, Work Exposure, and Academic Achievement (N=95)

Variable	n	%
Sociodemographic characteristics		
Gender (Male)	82	86.3
Marital Status (Married)	86	90.5
Psychosocial & Study Exposure		
Workplace Support (Yes)	86	90.5
Resilience Level (High)	88	92.6
Grade Point Average (GPA)	mean = 3.83, SD = 0.109, min. = 3.56, max. = 4.00	
Age (Years)	mean = 37.9, SD = 6.45, min. = 24, max. = 59	
Work Experience (Years)	mean = 9.36, SD = 6.19, min. = 0, max. = 30	
Weekly Working Time (Hours)	mean = 47.2, SD = 19.2, min. = 8, max. = 96	
Weekly Study Time (Hours)	mean = 11.7, SD = 7.23, min. = 2, max. = 40	

2. Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate correlation analysis showed that weekly study time was positively associated with GPA ($\rho = 0.29$, $p = 0.004$), whereas workplace support was negatively associa-

ted with GPA ($r = -0.24$, $p = 0.019$). Weekly working hours ($r = -0.07$, $p = 0.532$) and resilience ($r = -0.10$, $p = 0.324$) were not significantly associated with GPA (Table 2).

Table 2. Bivariate Correlation Between Psychosocial Work Factors and Academic Performance

Variable	r	p
Study Time	0.29	0.004
Workplace Support	-0.24	0.019
Weekly Working Hours	-0.07	0.532
Resilience	-0.10	0.324

3. Multivariate Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to identify independent factors associated with GPA. The model explained 11.6% of the variance in GPA. After adjustment for resilience, weekly study time, weekly working hours, family support, and workplace support, workplace support was

independently associated with GPA ($b = -0.08$, 95% CI -0.16 to -0.009 , $p = 0.028$). Weekly study time demonstrated a positive association with GPA ($b = 0.01$, 95% CI 0.01 to 0.01 , $p = 0.050$), whereas resilience, weekly working hours, and family support were not significantly associated with GPA.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Model for GPA Predictors

Predictor	b	95% CI		p
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Resilience	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.449
Weekly study time	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.050
Weekly working hours	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.523
Family support (Yes)	-0.01	-0.03	0.02	0.736
Workplace support (Yes)	-0.08	-0.16	-0.01	0.028
N observation = 95				
$R^2 = 11.6$				
Adj R-Squared = 0.066				
$P < 0.001$				

DISCUSSION

This study explored the relationship between professional demands, psychosocial work factors, and academic performance among occupational health professionals who were simultaneously engaged in graduate education. The findings offer insight into how workplace structures and personal resource allocation interact under conditions of dual role strain.

Workplace support was the only factor independently associated with GPA in the multivariable linear regression model, revealing a paradoxical relationship

between organizational support and academic performance. Although most participants reported receiving support from their employers to pursue further education, this support did not translate into improved academic performance. This suggests that formal or administrative approval alone may be insufficient when it is not accompanied by meaningful adjustments in workload. In practice, employees may receive permission to study while still being expected to maintain full productivity, creating a situation in which support becomes symbolic rather than structural. Under such circumstances, workplace

support may inadvertently function as a latent psychosocial stressor, intensifying role conflict rather than alleviating it (Borres and Paglinawan 2025; Carney et al., 2025; Wang and Kee, 2025a; Zhang, 2025).

In contrast, personal study time appears to be a more decisive factor in academic performance. Weekly study time demonstrated a borderline positive association with GPA after adjustment. For professionals balancing demanding occupational responsibilities, time represents a finite and highly contested resource (Ali et al. 2023; Badawy and Schieman 2020; Modaresnezhad et al. 2021). Academic success in this population seems to depend less on perceived external support and more on the individual's ability to allocate uninterrupted time for learning. This finding highlights the structural constraints faced by working students and underscores the central importance of time management in high-demand professional environments.

The role of resilience also warrants careful interpretation. Resilience was not independently associated with GPA in the adjusted model. Although resilience was prevalent among participants, it did not directly enhance academic performance. This suggests that resilience may function more as a psychological buffer than as a performance enhancer. In demanding occupational contexts, resilience may enable individuals to persist despite high stress and workload pressures, but it does not necessarily compensate for limited time or cognitive fatigue. The presence of resilience alone cannot override structural constraints imposed by excessive professional obligations.

From a public health perspective, the findings raise concerns about the cumulative cognitive and mental strain associated with prolonged dual-role demands. Occupational health professionals, despite

their awareness of workplace risks, may still experience significant strain when navigating intensive work schedules alongside academic commitments. High levels of work exposure combined with academic pressure can contribute to sustained fatigue, which may impair executive functioning and long-term well-being (Ahmed and Saxena 2025, 2025; Ech-chafi and Ali 2025; Gao et al. 2023; Islam, Alam, and Ahamed 2025; Meng et al. 2024; Şahan and Demiral 2024). Although weekly working hours were not significantly associated with GPA after adjustment, the intensity of exposure suggests the possibility of cumulative strain that may not be fully captured within a cross-sectional design.

The multivariable regression model explained 11.6% of the variance in GPA, indicating that academic performance is influenced by additional factors beyond those included in the present analysis. The modest explanatory power of the regression model also reflects the multifactorial nature of psychosocial phenomena. Academic performance among working professionals is influenced by a complex interplay of cognitive, environmental, organizational, and personal factors. No single domain of predictors is likely to fully explain performance variability in such a context. Recognizing this complexity strengthens the interpretation rather than weakening it, as it situates the findings within a broader biopsychosocial framework.

These findings carry important implications for both employers and academic institutions. Workplace support should move beyond symbolic endorsement toward structural accommodations, such as protected study time or temporary workload redistribution. Without tangible adjustments to work volume, formal support may fail to achieve its intended

benefit. Academic institutions may also consider targeted interventions for working professionals, including flexible scheduling, structured time-management guidance, and mental health monitoring. Supporting occupational health professionals in their educational advancement requires coordinated institutional and organizational strategies.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference and does not allow assessment of long-term cumulative effects of work-study strain. The sample consisted exclusively of occupational health professionals enrolled in a single graduate program, which may limit generalizability to other professional groups. In addition, workplace support was measured in a simplified manner and may not fully capture qualitative differences in the type or intensity of support provided. Future research should consider longitudinal designs and more nuanced measurement of organizational support to better understand the mechanisms underlying the support-performance relationship.

This study contributes to the understanding of psychosocial work factors within a specific professional cohort. It highlights that academic achievement under dual-role demands is shaped less by perceived support and more by structural time availability. From a public health standpoint, sustainable professional development requires alignment between institutional encouragement and actual workload management. Without such alignment, support may remain procedural rather than protective.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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