



Academic Burnout in Vocational High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were: 1) to describe the level of student academic burnout, 2) to analyze differences in student academic burnout based on gender, major, class, and ethnicity. This study uses a quantitative method with a survey design. The population is 570 students of SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang. Then, 287 students (81 male and 206 female) were taken as a sample using simple random sampling technique. The instrument used in data collection is the academic burnout scale. Data were analyzed using descriptive test and univariate test. The results showed that the students academic burnout was at a moderate level which was dominated by the cynicism aspect. Then there were significant differences related to academic burnout in students based on gender and major.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational high schools are part of vocational education which places more emphasis on mastering students' skills so that there is a balance between learning in class and practical work in the field. The goal is that students can have good readiness to work after finishing school. This of course will put more pressure on students because they must be able to practice well the various skills they already have. Pressure, demands and busy activities can certainly cause boredom in students. Boredom, of course, can happen to anyone both physically and mentally, especially students who have very busy activities. This is in line with the notion of saturation which is a condition of someone who experiences emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation and commitment caused by prolonged pressure (Schaufeli, 2017).

Burnout is defined as a psychological condition characterized by extreme tiredness due to too many and excessive demands. This fatigue is in the form of physical, emotional and psychological fatigue which is then manifested in the form of unproductive behavior, even withdrawing from previous activities (Said & Jannah, 2018). This is in line with Salmela-Aro et al. (2009) who defined burnout as a three-dimensional construct including emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and personal inadequacy as a student. Furthermore, Salmela-Aro et al. (2009) explained that emotional exhaustion can be defined as feelings of tension, anxiety and chronic fatigue caused by excessive workload at school. Then cynicism is expressed through an aloof attitude towards everything related to school work as well as through a loss of interest in academic work, and devaluing the meaning of learning. Meanwhile,

feelings of inadequacy as students are manifested through feelings of reduced competence, progress and success in academic achievement.

The negative impact that arises from boredom is the existence of extreme fatigue in students so that assessing the activity that is the stressor is something unpleasant. Gould & Weinberg (2007) explained that saturation is an attitude of physical, emotional, and social withdrawal from pleasurable activities. This withdrawal attitude certainly has a negative impact on decreasing individual productivity. This is in line with the opinion of Tangkudung and Mylsidayu (2017) that saturation is an attitude of withdrawing physically, emotionally, and psychologically from activities that were previously pleasurable for individuals due to the chronic stress felt by the individual. Stress caused by boredom for so long can damage and interfere with individual performance. Reber (1988) then emphasized that burnout can cause a person to experience a decrease in productivity within a certain period of time which results in not optimal results. When students experience learning burnout, their brain systems cannot coordinate properly, as a result they do not get maximum results. Some literature and previous research results state that burnout is characterized by three indicators, namely: (1) feelings of extreme emotional exhaustion (emotional exhaustion); (2) depersonalization and cynicism (depersonalization and cynicism); and (3) decreased personal accomplishment (Denton et al., 2013; Shi et al., 2019; Wijegoonewardene et al., 2019).

Emotional exhaustion in this case is defined as chronic emotional tension and saturation caused by excessive and continuous pressure. Exhaustion refers to feelings of exhaustion caused by the demands of study (Schaufeli & Hu, 2009). Students will feel other things excessively, both physically, mentally, and emotionally when they are tired. Students' physical fatigue is shown by headaches, nausea, diarrhea, flu, and others. Students' mental fatigue is shown by feeling unhappy, worthless, feeling of failure, and so on. Students' emotional fatigue is shown by feeling bored, sad, anxious, feeling burdened by academic activities, and so on. Fatigue will make students feel a lack of energy to face academic tasks and the people around them. Cynicism is defined as an attitude of indifference and loss of interest in something that is considered a stressor and the people associated with the stressor. Cynicism refers to a cynical or aloof attitude toward study (Schaufeli & Hu, 2009). Students take a cold demeanor and walk away from work and people around them when they are cynical thereby minimizing their involvement in the environment. Student cynicism is often shown by indifference, reluctance and laziness to learn. Negative behavior like this can have a serious impact on the effectiveness of student performance. Decreased personal accomplishment means reduced feelings of accomplishment and decreased accomplishment as a result of emotional exhaustion. This is marked by decreased competence, motivation, and self-productivity. Students who experience a decrease in personal accomplishment will feel incompetent, causing them to feel dissatisfied with themselves, the tasks they are doing, and even life. These three syndromes together characterize individuals who are experiencing burnout.

Burnout is one of the important topics to be examined because it gives a negative effect on students. Research Duru et al. (2014) and Uludag and Yaratana (2013) showed that Burnout is negatively related to academic achievement. In other words, the higher the burnout of a student, the lower the achievement he achieves. Bask and Salmela-Aro (2013) also found that burnout is positively related to the tendency of drop-out high school students. The higher the student's burnout level, the higher the possibility he dropped from school. Other studies also prove that burnout is negatively related to academic involvement and performance (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Apart from these academic problems, burnout is also thought to be related to behavioral problems, such as the use of alcohol (Jackson et al., 2016), insomnia (Pagnin et al., 2014), drug abuse (Walburg et al., 2015), excessive use of the internet and social media (Walburg et al., 2016), the emergence of self-defeating ideas (Dyrbye et al., 2008), and other behavioral problems. The results of the learning burnout survey conducted by Zakari (2008) found that as many as 47% of students were in the high category.

Based on the explanation above, this study has several objectives, namely (1) to describe the level of student academic burnout, (2) to analyze differences in student academic burnout based on gender, major, class, and ethnicity. This research can certainly provide in-depth information regarding academic burnout experienced by students and the differences based on gender, major and ethnicity. Therefore, the results of this study can be used as a source in the implementation of guidance and counseling as well as teaching and learning processes in overcoming students who experience academic burnout.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach to the survey method. The survey method is a method used by researchers in order to collect data in the form of samples from a certain population in the form of quantitative or numerical data, attitudes or opinions (Creswell, 2014).

Population and Sample

The population in this study were students of SMK Negeri 3 Singkawang grades X and XI. The population for this study was 570 students, then 287 students were taken as a sample using simple random sampling technique. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of demographic information from the respondents who were sampled in this study.

Table 1
Frequency and Percentage of Respondents Demographic Information

| Demographic Information | | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 81 | 28.2 |
| | Female | 206 | 71.8 |
| Major | Tourism | 46 | 16 |
| | Hospitality | 63 | 22 |
| | Culinary | 82 | 28.5 |
| | Fashion | 47 | 16.4 |
| | Software Development | 49 | 17.1 |
| Grade | X | 157 | 54.7 |
| | XI | 130 | 45.3 |
| Ethnicity | Malay | 75 | 26.1 |
| | Javanese | 19 | 6.6 |
| | Madura | 22 | 7.7 |
| | Dayak | 69 | 24 |
| | Chinese | 91 | 31.7 |
| | Bugis | 4 | 1.4 |
| | Sundanese | 5 | 1.7 |
| NTT | 2 | .8 | |

Instrument of Data Collection

The data collection instrument used in the research consisted of two parts, namely demographic information (gender, major, grade, ethnicity), and academic burnout. The academic burnout instrument used is the result of adoption of an instrument developed by Salmela-Aro and Näätänen (2005) with the name Student School Burnout Inventory (SSBI). This scale consists of several indicators, namely emotional exhaustion, cynicism and personal inadequacy. The number of statements used is 9 items. The researcher used a four-point Likert scale which was used as a choice of answers to the statements given for each instrument, ranging from very appropriate, appropriate, inappropriate and very inappropriate.

Table 2
 Variable and Its Aspect

| Variable | Aspect | Item |
|------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Academic Burnout | Emotional exhaustion | 1,2,4,7,9, |
| | Cynism | 5,6 |
| | Personal inadequacy | 3,8 |

Procedure and Data Analysis

The scale that has been adopted is immediately processed to be input into the Google form, then distributed to students who are the research sample. Each student is given a maximum of 30 minutes to fill in the scale according to predetermined guidelines, then send the results of the fields that have been confirmed to be appropriate. The collected data as a whole was analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. To analyze the results of the research on the first research objective, the data analysis technique used was percentages, then for the analysis of the second research objective using the mean, standard deviation, and univariate analysis. The significance level for all data analyzes was 5%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Level of Academic Burnout

The results of the descriptive analysis of academic burnout in Table 3 show that 10.8% are in the high category, 86.4% are at the moderate level and 2.8% are at the low level. Analysis of the results based on the aspects that make up academic burnout also shows that the average for each aspect is at a moderate level with a percentage range of 77.0%-84.0%. These results indicate that the average student experiences academic burnout in the moderate category, meaning that most students still experience academic burnout while participating in learning because of the many pressures, demands and activities given.

 Table 3
 Percentage: Level of Academic Burnout among Respondent

| Variable | Aspect | Percentage | | |
|------------------|----------------------|------------|--------|----------|
| | | High/More | Middle | Low/Less |
| Academic Burnout | Emotional exhaustion | 5.2 | 84.0 | 10.8 |
| | Cynism | 8.1 | 78.7 | 13.2 |
| | Personal inadequacy | 2.8 | 77.0 | 20.2 |
| | It All | 2.8 | 86.4 | 10.8 |

Differences in Academic Procrastination based on Gender, major, class, ethnicity

The results of the mean, SD, and univariate analyzes in Table 4 and Table 5 show that in the gender variable there is a significant difference between male and female students regarding academic burnout with a value of $F(1) = 4.4$, $p < 0.05$, and partial eta squared = .021. Then on the major variable, the results of the analysis also show that there are significant differences between students majoring in tourism, hospitality, culinary, fashion, and software development related to academic burnout with a value of $F(4) = 2.6$, $p < 0.05$, and partial eta squared = 0.048. In terms of class variables, the results of the analysis show that there is no significant difference between students in grades X and XI regarding academic burnout with a value of $F(1) = 2.3$, $p > 0.05$, and partial eta squared = 0.011. In terms of ethnicity, the results of the analysis also show that there are no significant differences between students from ethnic Malays, Javanese, Madurese, Dayak, Chinese, Bugis, Sundanese, and NTT in terms of academic saturation with a value of $F(7) = 1.3$, $p > 0.05$, and partial eta squared = 0.042.

Table 4
Mean and SD of Academic Procrastination based on gender, major, grade, ethnicity

| Variable | Academic Burnout | |
|-----------|----------------------|------|
| | Mean | SD |
| Gender | Male | 18.2 |
| | Female | 16.7 |
| Major | Tourism | 16.6 |
| | Hospitality | 17.7 |
| | Culinary | 17.6 |
| | Fashion | 16.1 |
| | Software Development | 17.3 |
| Grade | X | 17.4 |
| | XI | 16.8 |
| Ethnicity | Malay | 16.7 |
| | Javanese | 15.9 |
| | Maduranese | 17.5 |
| | Dayak | 17.4 |
| | Chienese | 17.6 |
| | Bugis | 13.5 |
| | Sundanese | 18.0 |
| | NTT | 14.0 |

Table 5
Univariate Analysis: Differences in Academic Procrastination based on Gender, Major, Grade, Ethnicity

| Effect | SS | df | MS | F | P | Partial Eta Squared |
|-----------|-------|----|------|-----|------|---------------------|
| Gender | 64.2 | 1 | 64.2 | 4.4 | .038 | .021 |
| Major | 153.4 | 4 | 38.4 | 2.6 | .036 | .048 |
| Grade | 33.0 | 1 | 33.0 | 2.3 | .135 | .011 |
| Ethnicity | 132.9 | 7 | 18.9 | 1.3 | .255 | .042 |

Discussion

The first objective of this study was to describe the level of academic burnout in vocational high school students. The results showed that 86.7% of the majority of students were in the medium category. This means that almost all students experience academic burnout which leads to the high category. This is in line with the results of previous studies which found that student academic burnout was in the moderate category (Rinawati & Darisman, 2020). The results of another survey conducted by Zakari (2008) found that as many as 47% of students were in the high category. Then it was reinforced by Thursan (2005) which stated that high/vocational high school students have a high vulnerability to experiencing academic burnout. Of course, this condition must be a concern of the school so that it can concentrate on overcoming student academic burnout. If not addressed immediately, it will greatly affect student productivity and performance in learning (Said & Jannah, 2018).

Pressure, demands and the high burden of learning activities that must be carried out by students can be factors that encourage students to experience academic burnout. There are factors that cause

burnout according to Slivar (2001), namely: (a) There are demands made by the school to its students to get maximum grades or achievements, so that because there are these demands it makes students feel burdened. (b) Limited facilities for students to develop creativity, and have an impact on their low participation in teaching and learning activities at school. (c) The lack of appreciation obtained by students, praise or appreciation for students is able to create enthusiasm for students to achieve both academic and non-academic achievements. (d) Interpersonal relationships between students and between students and teachers are reduced. (e) Parents have great expectations for students so that students have fear of not being able to fulfill these expectations. (f) Different viewpoints in achieving learning achievements to be achieved. In addition, the problem of excessive study load is one of the factors that has an impact on burnout (Yunita Sari, 2014; Lin & Huang, 2012). Excessive learning loads can include solid classes, lots of assignments, routine exercises, and other routine exercises that exceed individual capacities and abilities.

Academic burnout experienced by students certainly cannot be left alone because it will negatively affect the students themselves. Several research results related to academic burnout show that academic burnout is correlated with the tendency of student drop-out (Bask & Salmela-Aro, 2013), negatively correlated with student academic achievement (Duru et al., 2014; Uludag & Yaratan, 2013), also correlated negatively with academic engagement and performance (Schaufeli et al., 2002). In other words, academic burnout is one of the variables that can hinder student learning success (Rahman et al., 2020). To overcome this, various parties should help students overcome the academic burnout they are currently experiencing. Tangkudung and Mylsidayu (2017) explained that burnout can be overcome in 5 ways, namely increasing self-awareness, balancing rest and activity hours, choosing activities according to plan, seeking support from the immediate environment, and practicing mental training techniques. Relaxation for vocational students and several techniques for managing stress can also be done as a way to help minimize boredom (Said & Jannah, 2018).

The second objective of this study is to analyze differences in academic burnout based on gender, major, grade and ethnicity. The results of the study show that there are significant differences in academic burnout based on gender and major, but there are no significant differences in academic burnout based on grade and ethnicity. The results of this study are in line with the results of a study conducted by Salmela-Aro et al. (2008) which showed that there were significant differences between men and women regarding academic burnout. Nevertheless, there are also several studies that have different results from this study, namely that there is no significant difference in academic burnout based on gender (Backović et al., 2012). In major variables, significant differences in student academic burnout can be caused by different pressures between one major and another so that the fatigue experienced by students in one major and another is different (Slivar, 2001). From the results of this study it appears that gender and major affect the high or low student academic burnout.

Academic burnout in students is not entirely influenced by gender and major, but there are also various other factors such as individual personality, environmental conditions, social support, age, culture, level of education, type of work, income, employment status, and others (Backović et al., 2012; Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993; Ramdan & Fadly, 2016; Salmela-Aro et al., 2018; Ulfa & Aprianti, 2021). Therefore, future researchers can explore more deeply these various variables in determining the high or low academic burnout in students.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research data analysis, it can be concluded that the academic burnout of SMK students was at a moderate level. Then there were significant differences in academic burnout based on gender and major. These results indicate that there is an influence of gender and major on the high or low academic output of vocational students. Because there are still many demographic factors that can affect academic burnout, further research needs to be conducted to explore other variables that have the possibility of influencing academic burnout. Further research can also conduct research on a

wider population, such as high school students or Islamic high schools.

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