

Joyfull Learning Activities in Open Classroom Climate to Reduce Students Academic Stress

Eska Prawisudawati Ulpa ^{a,1*}, Muhammad Mona Adha ^{b,2}

^aFakultas Ushuluddin dan Studi Agama, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung

^bTeacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Lampung

¹ eskaulpa1985@gmail.com, ² mohammad.monaadha@fkip.unila.ac.id

* eskaulpa1985@gmail.com

Informasi artikel

Diterima:

27-09-2022

Disetujui:

19-11-2022

Kata kunci:

Akademik stress
Pembelajaran
menyenangkan
Keterbukaan
Kesejahteraan

ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran yang menyenangkan dan menarik bagi siswa secara tidak langsung dapat menurunkan tingkat stres akademik bagi mereka. Kecemasan siswa yang muncul dalam proses pembelajaran yang dialami siswa di kelas sering muncul dan berdampak pada motivasi belajar. Penelitian kuantitatif ini dilakukan di sekolah-sekolah dengan tingkat aktivitas siswa yang tinggi baik di dalam maupun di luar kelas sehingga menjadi latar belakang penelitian ini untuk melihat tingkat stres akademik dan cara mengatasi masalah tersebut agar siswa kembali belajar dengan senang dan termotivasi. Pembelajaran yang dibangun dengan melibatkan siswa, komunikasi yang menyenangkan, suasana kelas yang nyaman, dan pola interaksi belajar yang segar dapat mengurangi stres akademik siswa. Situasi pembelajaran yang menarik dapat menarik minat siswa untuk terlibat aktif dalam kegiatan pembelajaran bersama guru dan siswa lainnya. Stres akademik tidak dapat dihindari, kecemasan akibat proses pembelajaran dapat dialami oleh siswa dalam hal nilai, prestasi, kepercayaan diri, proses berpikir dalam konteks tersebut tentunya akan berpengaruh. Artikel ini memberikan kajian yang perlu dipahami oleh guru dan siswa bahwa pola kegiatan yang mendorong antusiasme guru dan siswa dalam berkolaborasi, berkontribusi dalam menciptakan ruang kelas yang meminimalkan stres akademik dan menghilangkan kecemasan.

ABSTRACT

Joyfull Learning Activities in Open Classroom Climate to Reduce Students Academic Stress. Joyful learning and interesting for students can indirectly reduce the level of academic stress for them. The students anxiety arises in the learning process experienced by students in the classroom often appears and has an impact on learning motivation. This quantitative research was conducted in schools with high levels of student activity both inside and outside the classroom so that it became the background for this study to see the level of academic stress and how to solve these problems so that students return to learning happily and motivated. Learning that is built by involving students, pleasant communication, a comfortable classroom atmosphere, and fresh learning interaction patterns can reduce student academic stress. An interesting learning situation can attract students to be actively involved in learning activities with teachers and other students. Academic stress cannot be avoided, the anxiety caused by the learning process can be experienced by students in terms of grades, achievements, self-confidence, thought processes in the context, of course, will affect. This article provides a study that teachers and students need to understand that patterns of activity that drive the enthusiasm of teachers and students in collaboration, contribute to creating classrooms that minimize academic stress and relieve anxiety.

Received:

Accepted:

Keywords:

*Academic Stress
Joyful Learning
Open Classroom Climate
Students well-being*

Introduction

Academic stress is a response that occurs because there are too many demands and tasks that students have to do (Olejnik & Holschuh, 2007; Deb et al., 2014; Deb et al., 2015; Jain & Singhai, 2018). Academic stress is stress on students that comes from the teaching and learning process or matters related to learning

activities including: pressure to pass the class, length of study, many many assignments, test scores, bureaucracy, getting scholarships, decisions to determine majors and careers and exam anxiety and time management (Desmita, 2010). Handling academic stress in students has two sides, namely from the side where students are able to control negative situations /

situations/experiences which are used as motivation for themselves, and the second is students who are unable to control their perceptions (anxiety in exams, grades, graduation, and many more) towards the goals to be achieved resulting in academic stress, fatigue in thinking, loss of motivation to learn and others.

Creating a classroom learning with a pleasant atmosphere and open classroom climate is an alternative solution to reduce academic stress on students. Apart from being given social support by families, teachers, peers, and other environments, it is also important to pay attention to aspects of the learning atmosphere in the classroom with fresher activities for students. Having more open classroom climate by accommodating various opinions, comments, discussions, and listening to each other so that at least it can give students attention that their presence is very important in the class. Respect, attention, appreciate, cherish, embody the character of students who are more responsible for both themselves and their classmates (Lickona, 1991).

How students can determine perceptions of learning activities and turn a learning load into something that actually increases motivation to continue to get the best results is needed. Motivation can be seen from intrinsic motivation and external motivation where students present themselves to participate in the learning process as well as possible. However, academic stress can make students lose motivation and have anxiety in themselves about the process being carried out and the results that will be achieved in the end. Related to student motivation, students actually have innovative and creative ideas, therefore the teacher provides a way for students to participate optimally according to their capacity. Students who are motivated and happy in learning can reduce academic stress on students and meet expected psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is a description of an individual's psychological health based on the fulfillment of the individual's psychological positive function criteria (Ryff, 1989). Psychological well-being is an achievement that is expected by every individual, including adolescents. They are expected to be psychologically prosperous in order to develop themselves and actualize themselves so that they can achieve

success, including moral intelligence (Abidin et al., 2015).

Fun learning is a teaching and learning atmosphere that provides a more open, less rigid atmosphere, and attracts students to be more involved in activities in the classroom (Alifah et al., 2020). Learning models are made varied in order to lessen feeling bored by organizing study groups, group assignments, or by arranging seats so that students can interact more and exchange ideas aimed at student self-development. Fun learning can take advantage of environmental media (physical, social, and cultural) which can enrich children's learning materials in the classroom, then the environment can act as a learning medium and as an object of study (Suparlan et al., 2008). The use of the environment as a learning resource can make students happy in the learning process. Students are individuals who know the most about the conditions and situations of learning at school and in the classroom, by involving students in learning with a more enjoyable way and in an open classroom climate, the ability of individuals to reduce academic stress can be achieved.

Method

The study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design to determine the relationship of academic stress to psychological well-being as moderated by coping strategies. Through a quantitative approach, researchers can analyze variables scientifically and make predictions and analysis results (Arikunto, 2002; Sugiyono, 2009). The hypothesis in this study is that there is a significant relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being in students. The subjects in this study were 272 students who are currently studying at Senior High School (SMA) in Malang.

Result And Discussion

Reducing Academic Stress to Improve Students Well-Being

The results showed a significant positive relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being as moderated by

coping strategies. The relationship between academic stress and the psychological well-being of adolescents is strengthened by the presence of coping strategies. Thus, when academic stress is low and coping strategies do not lead to engagement, psychological well-being will be low. On the other hand, if the academic stress experienced is high and the coping strategies lead to engagement, the psychological well-being will be high. The results also indicated that coping strategies function as moderating variables. Coping strategies have the effect of strengthening the relationship between academic stress and the psychological well-being of adolescents, it is known from the increase in the contribution of academic stress to the psychological well-being of adolescents after being moderated by coping strategies. So it can be explained that if the coping strategy that is carried out leads to engagement and functions as a moderating variable that strengthens the relationship, even though the academic stress experienced is in the high classification, the psychological well-being is still high.

Research conducted on Australian society shows the results that in 2014 the level of psychological well-being compared to the previous year and the lowest number was in the adolescent and middle adult age groups, while the level of stress was reported in the adolescent and early adult age groups. (Australian Psychological Society, 2015). The results of research conducted on 376 students in Malaysia proved that most of the sources of stress in adolescents came from academic problems, especially in junior high school students (Elias, 2011). Academic stress tends to lead to the pressure felt by students in their learning / school activities (common emotional) with a fairly wide scope including thinking about the burden of several tests, how to follow lessons well, the education system, thinking about the future, and graduation. Therefore, students' attention and ability to control themselves (self-regulation) is needed (Ramli et al., 2018).

The results of academic achievement have a relationship with the learning activities carried out by students, self-confidence in academics can have a negative impact on academic stress and academic burnout, hence self-confidence is very important to be developed by providing continuous social support through the development of educational programs (Yoon & Jung, 2014). Academic burnout is a loss of

motivation to learn, an emotional that arises because of dissatisfaction with the results achieved by students, resulting in decreased motivation. On the other hand, if students are satisfied with their academic life and the level of anxiety or depression is low and can be controlled by the students themselves, it can give good results in academics because they really enjoy and are involved in the learning process at school (Chambel & Curral, 2005; Marella & Setyawati, 2020).

Academic demands are one of the causes of stress for students in school (Hashim, 2003; Olpin, 1997; Tyrrell, 1992). Understand what the teacher teaches, compete with classmates, and fulfill what teachers and parents expect (Lal, 2014). Students in Senior High School revealed that the stress they feel at school (such as exams, rankings, homework, expectations and future achievement) is their biggest stress (Lohman & Jarvis, 2000). The results of this study confirm that most adolescents experience stress in their academic activities (Cohen & Single, 2001; Topper, 2007; Agolla & Ongori, 2009).

The academic stress that students experience is often associated with anxiety and depression (Abouserie, 1994; Gadzella et al, 1998; Pury, 2002). This shows that more negative things and emotions are felt by students who experience academic stress. Even though students in the learning process are expected to have positive emotions because this will have a positive impact on their psychological well-being (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002). Adolescents who are psychologically prosperous have the ability to realize their potential and are optimistic in facing difficult situations.

Coping strategies are strategies that lead to what individuals do to deal with stressful situations or emotionally burdensome demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The coping strategies that are carried out by each individual vary and cannot always lead to solutions to problems that cause stressful situations. Individuals carry out the coping process against stress through a transaction process with the environment, both behaviorally and cognitively. The ability of coping strategies can help adolescents cope with academic stress. An engagement coping strategy can minimize the impact of stress on psychological well-being (Park & Adler, 2003). These skills also help students become independent and able to solve

problems which will have an impact on improving their psychological well-being. This will make adolescents more successful academically and in their social life (Kadhiravan & Kumar, 2012).

Controlling beliefs or controlling perceptions and satisfaction with social support is related to reducing the occurrence of stress reduced psychological symptomatology (Felsten & Wilcox, 1992) especially from the internal side of the individual, while from the outside of the individual (external orientations) focus on gathering information and carrying out activities related to behavioral development (Lefcourt et al., 1984; Sandler & Lakey, 1982). Reducing stress is a significant source of psychological well-being for someone who is experiencing stress. But on the other hand, if the tasks done by students are high enough while the control of the assignments is low, social support is also low, it can interfere with student well-being / psychological well-being (PWB) and result in poor academic performance (Cotton et al., 2002). Therefore it is important to design student activities that are fun and generate motivation and desire to be involved in these activities with a focus on perceptions of academic work characteristics so as to improve student well-being (Chambel & Curral, 2005).

Fun Learning Activities and Creating Open Classroom Climate on Learning Process

The results showed that the existence of a pleasant learning process with a more open classroom situation in terms of interaction and communication that fosters enthusiasm including student motivation significantly reduces the impact of academic stress experienced by students. Interesting and fun learning can strengthen their learning motivation and focus more on the learning process and think positively on learning outcomes from previous efforts. In this study, it was found that most of the students were at a level of academic stress which was well handled by each student. The attention of the teacher and the attention of friends in the class will certainly add to the class atmosphere that is warmer and more pleasant, therefore class conduciveness is a determining factor in teaching and learning activities.

The learning process of students in learning subject matter is generally carried out both inside school (in the classroom) and outside of school (at home). The development of attitudes and mental as well as student motivation is

certainly influenced by how students learn effectively in completing their assignments and studying the material that has been given by the teacher. Every student has different attitudes and behaviors, including how students are able to control beliefs, perceptions and manage their emotional states. What happens outside of students, there are various aspects that are part of the routine or activities that must be carried out, of course, this returns to the students' self-concept perceptions whether it has a positive or negative impact (Syah, 2003). If the student has a negative self-concept towards himself, it can cause anxiety (for example, worrying about being abandoned by his friends, failing the test, not maximizing the test score, the assignment with less good results), therefore special attention is given to the student so that can improve his self-concept (Syah, 2003).

Opening a pleasant learning condition, interaction and mutual respect between teachers and students, between students themselves can create a learning environment that leads to student involvement and meaningful learning (Robinson & Kakela, 2006; Rafzan et al., 2019). From various articles on academic stress, what really matters is the support of people around students to provide enthusiasm and other positive values. Creating classrooms with more open and democratic situations provides opportunities for teachers and students to get to know each other's characteristics, then the teacher appreciates students as individuals who are partners in the learning process (Adha, 2010). In fact, according to Robinson and Kakela, there are other ways to eliminate stiffness and boundaries between teachers and students, namely by doing field trips and presenting guest speakers in the classroom so that students can write reports on environmental conditions and social complexities (Robinson & Kakela, 2006).

Another side that needs to be realized in creating fun learning and an open classroom climate is that every student has a habit of how he learns. Teachers must understand that some students like learning styles by listening to explanations from the teacher, watching learning videos, discussing and other learning styles. Multimodal and kinesthetic students can adapt quickly in experimental learning, in the sense that students with kinesthetic abilities do not experience significant problems if learning is more about programs or activities, while students who are in the read-write learners

category have to put in more effort than the category. kinesthetic, because read-write learners are more learning conventionally or through discussion (Durham, 2007). Thus, in overcoming and reducing academic stress on students, teachers should be able to consider the learning styles that are applied in the classroom.

Academic stress is a condition where there is an imbalance in an individual against academic stressors that exceeds the available resources which can affect the individual's physical, psychological and social. Academic stress consists of 1. Pressure from study (pressure caused by learning activities); 2. Workload (task load); 3. Worry about grades; 4. Self-expectation (hope); 5. Despondency (hopelessness or discouragement) (Sun et al., 2011; Jain & Singhai, 2018). Students' ability in problem solving, providing ideas for alternative solutions in the classroom, having various experiences from inside and outside the classroom, having creativity, thinking critically, optimizing self-confidence and self-perception (Robinson & Kakela, 2006). These aspects should be utilized by teachers in supporting students to have the ability to reduce academic stress they experience. The interaction process and implementation of Life Skills values can strengthen student well-being.

Conclusion

Fun and interesting learning are certainly very popular with students, therefore teachers must be able to design a learning process that includes them in activities both inside and outside the classroom to strengthen their learning motivation. Learning in a pleasant atmosphere and open classroom climate in general can reduce student academic stress because students can overcome the anxiety they experience by being diverted by a fun learning process and the support of teachers and friends in the classroom. Therefore, strategies, models, and fun learning innovations are important factors to provide students with a sense of comfort in learning. As the time when students experience academic stress, students will experience anxiety, pressure and behavior changes that are less adaptive. This will result in difficulty concentrating, easily distracted by external situations and less motivated to learn (Yuwanto, 2010). The dimensions of self-control (autonomy) and the environment (environmental mastery) concern the ability to self-determination, independence, freedom and

ability to regulate behavior and the environment. This means that the individual is able to manipulate the situation so that the stress he experiences can be overcome so that he is able to keep moving according to his purpose in life and is able to continue to develop himself (Ryff, 1995).

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Dr. H. Latipun, M.Kes and Dr. Iswinarti, M.Si from Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang-East Java and The Headmaster of SMAN 1 Malang, SMAN 3 Malang, and SMAN 4 Malang for support and insightful information to this research.

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