

STUDENTS' PERSONAL PROBLEMS IN FINISING THEIR STUDIES

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Abstract: Generally, students of English study program of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Tanjungpura University finish their study more than five years while in fact they could finish it within four years. This research is to identify the personal problems faced by the students. The participants of this research are 50 students. This descriptive study used questionnaires to gather the data. The results of data analysis showed that the problems faced by the students are: (1) The students feel unsatisfied with the college facilities to support teaching and learning process; (2) The students do not have clear study goal when entering a faculty; (3) The students face financial hardship to pay their tuition; (4) The students have lack of motivation to finish their study; (5) The students feel unconfident whether they can finish their study or not; (6) The students are under pressure that worsen their study process; (7) The students' parents do not have concern on their children success.

Keywords: Students' Personal Problems, Descriptive Research

Abstrak: Umumnya, mahasiswa program pendidikan bahasa inggris di fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan universitas Tanjungpura menyelesaikan kuliah dalam rentang waktu yang relatif lama, yakni lima tahun atau lebih; padahal mereka dapat menyelesaikan kuliah dalam kurun waktu empat tahun. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa dalam menyelesaikan kuliah mereka. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode peneltian deskriptif. Jumlah responden dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 50 orang. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa adalah: (1) Tidak puas terhadap fasilitas yang tersedia dikampus yang dinilai kurang memadai untuk dijadikan sarana penunjang kegiatan belajar mengajar, (2) Mahasiswa tidak mempunyai studi-gol yang jelas ketika mereka memutuskan untuk melanjutkan pendidikan hingga ke jenjang bangku kuliah, (3) Mahasiswa menghadapi kesulitan ekonomi untuk membayar uang perkuliahan, (4) Mahasiswa tidak termotivasi untuk menyelesaikan kuliahnya, (5) Kurangnya kepercayaan diri mahasiswa untuk menyelesaikan kuliah, (6) Adanya perasaan tertekan yang dirasakan oleh mahasiswa sehingga membuat proses penyelesaian kuliah menjadi terhambat, (7) Kurangnya perhatian orangtua mahasiswa dalam membimbing anak-anaknya mencapai kesuksesan.

Kata Kunci: Permasalahan Mahasiswa, Penelitian Deskriptif

Education plays one of the most important roles in the life of every person because it opens huge possibilities to reach success in life. Last decade, Indonesian government declared 12 years compulsory education. It was aimed to raise the quality of human resources in Indonesia.

As the result of 12 years compulsory education, most of Indonesian are aware of the importance of education for their lives. Many parents encourage their children to continue their study into higher level. They realize that world is changing, in order to survive they encourage their children to go to college. They hope that one day their children grow to be better, more talented, and competent persons in life through completing their higher education.

Bound, Lovenheim and Turner (2007 p. 3) said that in the past thirty years, substantial growth in college enrollment among high school graduates has not been matched with a comparable expansion in college degree attainment. Concurrently, for those who do obtain a degree, average time to completion of the baccalaureate (BA) degree has increased over this time period.

The same phenomenon also happens in Tanjungpura University (UNTAN) as the primary university in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. It is reported that from 2002-2005 the numbers of students who entered Tanjungpura University especially English study program are 993 students; it was not parallel with the numbers of students who had graduated were 42 students. Only five percent of students who can finish their study over the time given, yet the numbers of students who had completed their study should be at least sixty percent of total students.

Being aware of this condition, the writer believes that there must be problems faced by the students of English study program of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Tanjungpura University who spent long time to finish their study. The writer believes it would be beneficial to investigate this condition.

In this study the writer specifically investigate the personal problems faced by the students. The writer believes that everything should be analyzed from the personal perspectives since every person has their own unique characteristics, individual needs, and of course personal problems which is different in one community.

METHOD

The research method used in this research is descriptive which provides information about conditions, situations, and events that occur in the present. Richards and Schmidt (2002 p. 152) defined descriptive research as an investigation that attempts to describe accurately and factually a phenomenon, subject or area.

The number of participants in this research is 50 students who is based on the estimation amount of the students that can be contacted by the writer. An accidental sampling technique will be used to choose the participants for this research. "Accidental sampling technique is a sampling technique used to collect data at once, so the sample is those who are available at the time present" (Hidayat, 2007).

The data was collected by using indirect technique (questionnaire) which is constructed by using several possible answers for each questions and one blank answer option left as the space for other answers which come from the participants' point of view.

There was also one question in the last number in the questionnaire which was used by the participants to write down the other problems (out of the category mentioned by the writer) that they face in finishing their study.

The answers which came from the participants were used as the secondary data to answer the problems (additional problems) faced by the students in completing their study.

The answer of the questionnaire calculated into percentage form by using this formula: **Percentage of reasons**(%) = $\frac{\text{The sum of each answers choices}}{\text{The sum of participants (n)}} \times 100\%$.

THE LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

This study has three limitations: (1) **The participants.** The number of participants which is only 50 persons. Consequently, the data is too small to generalize; (2) **The theoretical background.** Almost of theories of this research are derived from the studies in developing countries where the situation and the culture are different from the Indonesian culture; (3) **The technique of collecting data.** In fact this study need interview. However, the writer had very limited time to conduct interview with the prospector participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Majority of the participants claimed that they have two main problems in finishing their study. The first one is that they have lack motivation to finish their study. Second, the participants felt unsatisfied with the facilities in the faculty, especially the books placed in the libraries which cannot be used as thesis references. So the study and satisfaction become problematic. The following sections present the overall findings of this research.

For all of the students of English study program of FKIP Untan Pontianak, the variables which has impact to in finishing their study are: (1) Motivation (98%); (2) Self-efficacy and family support (96%); (3) Parental expectations (86%); (4) Study goal (82%); (4) Students' satisfaction to the college climates (66,67%); (5) Financial issues (40%).

The problems faced by the students are: (1) Feeling unsatisfied (40%) with the college facilitations in campus, especially the books placed in the libraries which cannot be used as thesis references; (2) The students do not have clear study goal (36%) when they attend faculty; (3) The students face financial difficulties (34%) to pay their tuition; (4) The students have lack motivation (18%) to finish their study; (5) The students felt unconfident (10%) whether they can finish their study or not; (6) The students were under pressure (4%) that worsen their study process; (7) The students' parents do not have concern (2%) on their children success.

From the students' self report section, the writer found other problems faced by the students in finishing their study. The problems are: (1) Problems which come from the students themselves (62%); (2) Problems with the lecturers (36%). (3) Problems with campus facilities and academic procedures (24%).

Discussion

This research is based on a discordant data which shows that the amounts of students who enter English study program are not parallel to the amount of the students who had graduated. The following sections will describe the overall problems.

The research result showed that the students mostly feel unsatisfied to the college facilities; especially the libraries served. The students said that at most, books placed in the libraries are not relevant to be a research references, even some books are out of date. Then, too long and complicated academic procedures, it consumes much time and energy. On the other hand, the internet connection in their campus takes too long time to connect. And also, there are some lecturers who consume many weeks or even more than three months for thesis correction. These things make the students' spirit go down, as the result the students consumes much time to finish their study.

Study goal becomes other important thing to be concerned as it will lead the students to their real destinations, in this case what they want to reach through higher level of education. The writer found that the students do not have clear study goal when they enter the faculty. They said that they just follow the ways: after they graduated from senior high school, they will continue their study in a faculty. There is no destination they want to reach through their continuously study. The absences of study goal lead the students into something that they do not know about. It is indicated by their orientation in the college. Work-life oriented students and studied oriented students will differ from non-committed students (the students who do not have clear study goal). Non-committed students will waste much time in doing something, or many things unclearly. Then, they spend much time to finish their study because they do not have a clear goal to go.

Financial issues become one of the important problems faced by the students. It can be seen as almost half of the students are from middle socioeconomic status in which their families earn money Rp.1.000.000,- to Rp.2.000.000,- per month. Swail (2004 p. 9) said "attending college and persisting to degree completion is most often rewarded with higher annual and lifetime earnings. But for many low-income and minority students, enrollment and persistence decisions are driven by the availability of financial aid." The limitation of the financial aids served by the government makes the students compete strictly to get it, or they need to get part-time job to support their study and everyday necessities. The students stated that monthly-money from their parents not enough to support their necessities, so that they need to work to earn money by themselves; having much money make them easy to do everything. That's why they spend much time to finish their study. Therefore, when the study is not a priority; it's clear that it will be less developed.

Motivation is a booster for students in doing something. Whether she/he intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, the main matter is motivation play a big

role of a person in doing everything, including studying. Students will do all they can, all their best if they truly motivated. Conversely, the students spend much time to finish their study if they have lack of motivation. The students stated that the factors which make them feel unmotivated are: laziness, bored, unconfident, tired, moody, get problems from lecturers, complicated lecture or institution procedure, difficult to find thesis references, busy to work, no friends to share problems with, bad time management, taking care of children, and even there are some students said that she got problems from her parents who always put her down, push her out, always want her to do things they want even the things that she can't do, or lately, the students realizes that teaching is not their passion.

According to Seifert cities in Round (2005 p.34) 'self-efficacy' refers to a person's belief about whether s/he is able/unable to perform the task at hand. Students who are efficacious (those who perceive themselves as essentially capable) are more likely to be self-regulating, and to participate in study activities, including those which they feel may be difficult. They believe that they have the ability to meet challenges with success. Those who feel themselves less capable will avoid difficult tasks, and to take a performance-oriented approach. That's why unconfident students will spend much time to finish their study, because at once they judge that they cannot write thesis, they make themselves to be unable to do something. But, they need to finish their study.

One of the important things for the students is support from their families. Pinkerton et al (2004 p.22) define family support as both a style of work and a set of activities which reinforce positive in formal social networks through integrated programs, generally provided to families in their own homes and communities. Recognizing their children study can help parents to encourage them complete their study as soon as possible. In this research, the writer found that the students feel under pressures that worsen their studies process. It is because there is mismatch of the ways parents supporting their children to gain success with the ways of the students want to be supported. Some of the students noted that they want their parents to patiently wait for the day of they finish their study, some students wish their parents not to forcing them to be the best in everything because they just only can do the best without being the best in some cases, do not be angry with them, just let them do their study, stop scolding and asking when they will finish their study, let them share the problems they faced in campus, do not compare them to the other person who had finished the study; parents may do everything as long as the things do not make them under pressure, give support when they get stuck, pray for them, and ask their study progress (but not every day). Support is needed to make someone success and happy. No one can deny that their family support play a significant role in their life. But, the wrong ways of supporting person will make them feel stress and it will make things get worse.

One of the main reasons why the students of English study program still continue their study is that they want to make their parents happy, and realize their parents' expectations, although it spends longer time. Parental expectations are the hopes and beliefs which parents hold for their children. Parental expectations can motivate children to build a strong mind and encourage them to achieve their best academic performance to gain success. Jacob (2010 p.12) said that parental

aspirations and expectations represent a critical role that parent have in getting their child ready for college and helping them to be successful once there. When there is no parents concern on their children success, it will make the children less-responsible to their lives and to the others things.

In accordance with the research problems of this study, it cannot be denied that the problems faced by the students come from many aspects. These problems are: (1) Problems which come from the students themselves (62%) such as: the participants are lazy, moody, lack of motivation, don't have vehicle to go to campus, long distance to get to campus, don't concentrate to do thesis, busy to work to earn money, taking care of children or family members, and they have bad grammar skill. (2) Problems with the lecturers (36%) such as: the participants are hard to meet some lecturers for consultation or something else, always takes a long time or rarely even a whole day waiting to meet them; Thesis correction takes too long time; Some lecturers are always busy of their business, they don't think about their students; Some lecturers are moody and not friendly or easy to talk with; Some lecturers only give criticism, they don't give any suggestions, solutions, or support their students. (3) Problems with campus facilities and academic procedures (24%) such as: the books placed in the library cannot be used as thesis references, slow internet connections, too long and complicated academic procedures, and get problems with TOEFL scores.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

The results of this study indicated that a set of factors played a rule in the students' problems in finishing their study. The right and intensive cooperation from the students, parents, and lecturers is needed in order to find and develop the best solutions to solve the problems stated above. We have to do a continuously evaluation to minimize and then to prevent the same problems happen in the future.

Suggestions

For the Students

1. If there is no thesis references students can get from libraries, they may try to find references from internet. There are lots of sources we can get through internet. Students may try some websites address the writer list below:
<http://www.tesl-ej.org>; <http://www.uk.sagepub.com/home.nav>;
<http://www.cambridge.org>; <http://www.pdf-searcher.com>;
<http://www.linkpdf.com>; Free Journal Research: www.globethics.net/library
2. The students may try to discuss with the prospectors persons about their future steps and problems they faced for the best ways.

For Lecturers and Dean

The campus bureaucracy should be made simpler and faster.

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