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The Role of Parent-Child Relationship, Self-Esteem, Academic Self-Efficacy to Academic Stress

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Abstract

Homeschooling students can experience academic stress. Parent-child relationship, self-esteem, and also academic self-efficacy are assumed as factors influencing the academic stress. Do parent-child relationship, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy have effect simultaneously to homeschooling students' self-regulated learning? The purpose of this study is to measure the influence of parent-child relationship, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy to academic stress on homeschooling students. The direct and indirect effect can be seen from the empirical model when fit the data. Subjects are 87 homeschooling students in Tangerang. Academic stress constructed from Ang et.al. (2009) ($\alpha = 0.875$), academic self-efficacy constructed from Bandura (1997) ($\alpha = 0.907$), self-esteem constructed from Rosenberg (1965) ($\alpha = 0.758$), parent-child relationship constructed from Brook et.al. (2012) ($\alpha = 0.875$). Structural Equation Model is used to analyze the data. The empirical model has goodness of fit. It explains the influence of parent-child relationship, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy to academic stress on homeschooling students. The result shows that parent-child relationship has no direct effect to academic stress or indirect effect through academic self-efficacy. On the other hand there is indirect effect from parent-child relationship to academic stress through self-esteem. Parent-child relationship, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy are good predictors to homeschooling students' academic stress. But parent-child relationship only effects students' academic stress through self-esteem and not strong enough to effects academic stress through academic self-efficacy. At this point, parents play important role to build positive self-esteem related to the homeschooling activities.

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Introduction

Homeschooling is a learning process in which family, especially parents, take charge of their child's/children's education (Korkmaz and Duman, 2014). In other words, parents teach their child/children at home. In addition to parents, tutors can be asked to come to the house and provide instructions to the child/children at home (Mulyadi, 2010). Education system of homeschooling is adapted to fit the child's/children's needs with open curriculum and flexible learning schedules in accordance with the agreement between the child/children, parents and tutors

(Sugiarti, 2009). Several studies have explained the importance of parents' role in providing support for their child's/children's learning process during homeschooling (Collom, 2005; Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007). This is naturally understandable given the fact that the learning process takes place at home and among family members, particularly parents, who must be actively involved in providing any necessary support for their child/children in attaining the best outcomes from their education.

Despite the fact that students learn at home, still the students are obliged to study, do the assignments, and take the equivalency examination. Inevitably, those activities are commonly become sources of academic stress among students (Wilson, Barnes-Holmes, & Barnes-Holmes, 2014). Shahmohammadi (2011) confirmed this by stating that the sources of students' academic stress, among others, are examination, the amount and complexity of material that must be learned, difficulties in understanding the material, and the amount of assignment.

There are some variables which are considered to be affecting academic stress. The first is academic self-efficacy. It is essential for students to have academic self-efficacy because it will guide them in having confident to cope any academic challenges and demands. Hence, the anxiety and the academic stress will diminish. Rovira, Edo, and Fernandez-Castro (2010) argued that the higher the students' self-efficacy related to their academic assignments, the lower the academic stress that they perceive.

The second variable is self-esteem. Students with positive self-esteem are considered to be having ability to meet any academic challenges and demands. Self-esteem drives students to perceive academic demands as challenges and as a result they do not suffer from academic stress. Ertugut and Ertugut (2010) have explained that self-esteem is associated with academic stress, in which students who have positive self-esteem tend to have lower academic stress. Also, self-esteem is connected to academic self-efficacy. Students with positive self-esteem tend to feel more confident and steady in accomplishing academic assignments. Students with high positive self-esteem will also have high academic self-efficacy (Di Giunta, Alessandri, Gerbino, Kanacri, Zuffiano, & Caprara, 2013).

The third variable which is also considered to affect the students' academic stress is relationship between parents and their child/children. This variable becomes significant in this study as the context of this study involves homeschooling students as participants. Since the students learn at home with the help of their parents or tutors, then the relationship between parents and their child/children plays a crucial role in supporting students' learning process. Kim and Lee (2013) argued that poor relationship between parents and their child/children contributes to child/children suffering from academic stress. In such condition, child/children feel that they are not socially supported and they feel that they are alone in facing their academic problems. So, students who have poor relationship with their parents will be more prone to suffer from academic stress.

The ways parents raise their child/children influence the development of child/children self-esteem (Amir & Gatab, 2013). Parenting then establishes relationship between parents and their child/children since early childhood (Mogonea & Mogonea, 2014; Nurmi & Pullianinen, 1991). Some studies have argued that when parents provide more care, attention, empathy, and support to their child/children, then the child/children will have more positive self-esteem (Parker & Benson, 2004; Trumpeter, Watson, O'Leary, & Weathington, 2008).

In addition, harmonious relationship between parents and their child/children provide reinforcement and confidence in child/children to face any challenges and problems in their lives, including academic challenges and demands which may potentially become the sources of academic stress. Givertz and Segrin (2012) stated that well-balanced relationship between parents and their child/children will help child/children develop a strong self-efficacy.

Based on the above elaboration, the aim of this study is to examine the constellation of variables, namely relationship between parents and their child/children, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy in affecting academic stress among homeschooling students.

Method

Participants in this study were 86 homeschooling students, consisting of 46 male students and 40 female students. The mean age of participants was 17:39 years (SD = 3.86). The participants were students of Homeschooling Kak Seto in South Tangerang, Banten. The residence of the participants were quite varied, in which most lived in Jakarta (N = 42; 48.83%), in Tangerang (N = 35; 40.69%), in Bogor (N = 5; 5.81%), in Bekasi (N = 2; 32%) and in Depok (N = 2; 32%).

Academic stress. Academic stress is students' perception which tends to be negative regarding their parents' and teachers' expectations for them to attain high academic achievements (Ang, Huan, & Braman, 2007). To

measure the academic stress, a scale adapted from Ang, Klassen, Chong, Huan, Wong, Yeo, and Krawchuk (2009) was used. This scale has two aspects, namely (1) inability to meet teachers' and parents' academic expectations, and (2) inability to meet their own academic expectations. This scale has a range of answers from 1 to 4 with answers from Very Often to Never. This scale consists of 9 items with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.875.

Academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy is students' belief of being able to properly accomplish all academic assignments (Schunk & Pajares, 2001). To measure the academic self-efficacy, this study used academic self-efficacy scale which is based on Bandura's (1997) basic concept of self-efficacy, namely (1) magnitude, (2) generality, and (3) strength. This scale has a range of responses from 1 to 6 with choices of response from highly appropriate to highly inappropriate. This scale consists of 15 items with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.907.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem is self-image or self-evaluation, positively perceived by a person concerning him/herself (Mruk, 2006). Self-esteem in this study was measured by using Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1965). This scale has a range of responses from 1 to 6 with choices of response from highly appropriate to highly inappropriate. This scale consists of 10 items with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.758.

Parents – child relationship. Relationship between parents and their child/children is interaction between parents and their child/children in which parents provide sufficient affection and attention so that the child/children appreciate(s) and has/have a positive identification of their parents (Brook, Lee, Finch, & Brown, 2012). To measure the relationship between parents and their child/children, this study used Kim's and Lee's (2013) scale of parent – child relationship. This scale has a range of responses from 1 to 6 with choices of responses from highly appropriate to highly inappropriate. This scale has 6 items with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.875.

Results and Discussion

The results seemed to indicate that the obtained empirical model is not different from the developed theoretical model. The obtained empirical model has the goodness of fit with the Chi-Square of 19.064 with probability of 0.087 ($p < .05$). The empirical model is shown in Figure 1.

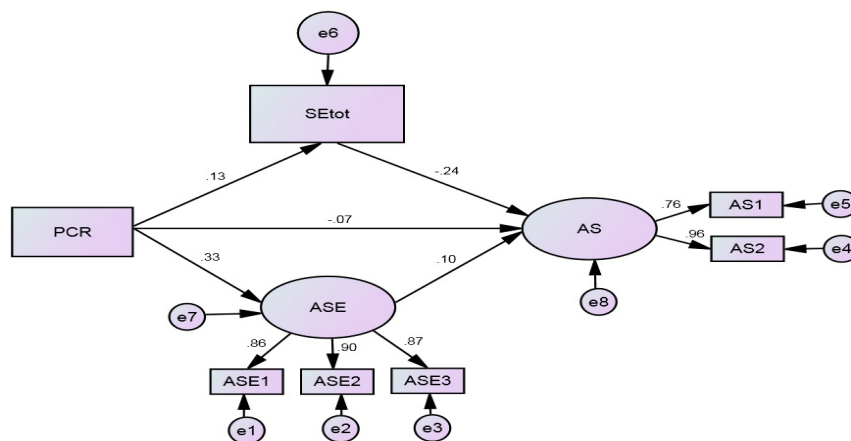


Figure 1. Model of Parent-Child Relationship, Self-Esteem, Academic Self-Efficacy, and Academic Stress

Meanwhile, from the empirical model, it is known that the effects which can be explained are only on the relationship between parent and their child/children towards academic self-efficacy at 0.33 ($p < .01$) and on self-esteem towards academic stress at -0.24 ($p < .05$). The other results showed no significant direct effect on relationship between parents – child/children towards academic stress, as well as indirect effect through self-esteem and academic self-efficacy.

A healthy relationship between parents and their child/children can give the comfort at home for the

child/children. It also can improve communication and strengthen emotional relationships as well as child/children attachment to their parents. Parents can act as parents and friends to their child/children in supporting and assisting them in dealing with and managing some difficulties in life. As homeschooling students who must also deal with many assignments, they need the confidence and the belief that they are able to manage all the academic complexities and demands. This condition can be fulfilled when parents are successful in providing positive confidence and belief to them so that they can develop a good self-efficacy and learn as well as uphold strategies to achieve their desired goals in life (Garcia, Restubog, Toledano, Tolentino, and Rafferty, 2012).

Sharma and Jagdev (2012) stated that students with high academic stress tend to have low self-esteem. Hence, they need to have boost of self-esteem in order to lower the academic stress. Conversely, students with positive self-esteem tend to be able to perceive many things positively, including the academic complexities and demands. Such students perceive academic matters such as school assignments, learning materials, and examinations as challenges. Therefore, more positive self-esteem leads to lower academic stress. This is in line with the study of Erturgut and Erturgut (2010) that found negative effect of self-esteem towards academic stress among students.

Students with positive self-esteem are more resistant to pressure and rarely have complaints on matters relating to the academic matters. Thus, they do not thoroughly perceive these matters as sources of academic stress (Gerber & Puhse, 2008). An interesting research experiment conducted by Yang et al. (2014) revealed that positive self-esteem can affect the production of certain hormones in the human body to become more resistant to stress. This indicates that the positive self-esteem turns to have positive relationship with physiological responses in dealing with matters that are considered to be psychically depressing. Even in a state of stress, individuals with positive self-esteem are better to perform an effective stress management as strategy in coping the matters (Alizadegani, Zaini, & Delavari, 2014).

Based on the results, it is also indicated that there is no significant difference in the variables parents – child/children relationship, self-esteem, academic self-efficacy, and academic stress among the male and female students. However, it appears that male students have slightly higher mean score of self-esteem ($M = 29.52$; $SD = 4.28$) than female students ($M = 28.18$; $SD = 5.31$).

Several studies have found that male students do possess higher self-esteem than female students (Diseth, Meland, & Breidablik, 2014; Moksnes, Moljord, Espnes, & Byrne, 2010). Among college students, there is similar situation in which male students tend to have higher self-esteem than female students (Rahardjo, 2014). This can happen because among students, there are many ways of gaining self-esteem, through academic achievement, peer groups, the presence of the opposite sex, and so on. Therefore, in order to compete in an academic environment, male students need positive self-esteem.

However, similar results were also found in academic stress in which male students have higher mean score ($M = 21.54$; $SD = 5.97$) than female students ($M = 20.98$; $SD = 5.34$). In detail, it can be seen that male students tend to be more academically stress due to fear of not being able to meet the demands of tutors and parents as well as their own ($M = 11.91$; $SD = 3.03$ and $M = 9.63$; $SD = 2.94$), compared to female students ($M = 11.80$; $SD = 3.50$ and $M = 9.18$; $SD = 2.41$). Male students often assume that academic performance is important (Moksnes et al., 2010). As a result, there is emerging demands within the male students to be able to prove themselves to their family and tutors that they are academically worthy.

On the other hand, homeschooling female students tend to have higher academic self-efficacy ($M = 49.45$; $SD = 7.82$) than male students ($M = 48.48$; $SD = 8.59$). Also, it appears that female students tend to have better parents – child/children relationship ($M = 22.65$; $SD = 5.49$) than male students ($M = 22.02$; $SD = 4.42$).

Sagone and de Caroli (2014) stated that students who have personal control of the situation around them, including having a more positive perception of their future, tend to be more efficient in delivering their academic behavior. Since it is found that male students have shown a tendency of having higher academic stress than female students, their personal control is not as well as the female students. As a consequence, female students have a more positive academic perception than male students, especially in terms of self-confidence to be able to properly meet all academic demands.

Meanwhile, the fact that female students have better parents – child/children relationship than male students is also implicitly argued by Wang et al (2014). Their Research stated that among teens, the turmoil experienced by boys in facing changes is more volatile than that in girls. At this phase, boys, who could be so expressive and emotional, tend to be more difficult in establishing relationship with parents, including listening to the suggestions given by their parents. Although such situation may also happen in girls, but the effect is not as significant as in boys. It means that girls tend to be more able to control themselves and are better to maintain their quality

relationship with their parents.

Conclusion

The academic stress experienced homeschooling students is affected by a constellation of parents - child/children relationship, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy. However, self-esteem has a direct influence towards academic stress, while the others do not. Meanwhile, the fear of not being able to meet their own academic expectations is the condition which can explain their academic stress instead of the fear of not being able to meet their tutors' academic expectations.

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