

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN HAPPINESS LEVEL
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 7th
SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION
STUDY PROGRAM OF SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

A THESIS

by

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English Education Study Program

Language and Arts Education Department



FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

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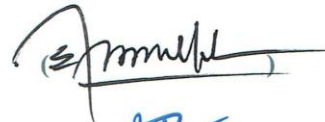
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Certify that thesis entitled "The Correlation between Happiness Level and Academic Achievement of the 7th Semester Students of English Education Study Program Students of Sriwijaya University" is my own work and I did not do plagiarism or inappropriate quotation against the ethics and rules commended by the Ministry of Education of Republic Indonesia No. 17, 2010 regarding plagiarism in higher education. Therefore, I deserved to the court if I am found to have plagiarized this work.

Palembang, 25th July 2022

The Undersigned,



Aura Amalia Annisa

DEDICATIONS

I am sincerely dedicated this thesis to:

- The Almighty God, Allah SWT for the health and strength given to me to complete this thesis;
- My beloved parents, Doddy Suprpto and Wijayati, and to my beloved sisters, Alya Farrah Addiba and Sabrina Rahma Sarita who always supported and encouraged me in the worst and the best of my journey.

MOTTO

“For indeed, with hardship (will be) ease. Indeed, with hardship (will be) ease.”

Q.S. Al-Inshirah (94 : 5-6)

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Aura Amalia Annisa

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate whether or not there was a significant correlation between happiness level and academic achievement. Applying a correlational study design, this present study got involved the 7th-semester students of the English Education Study Program within the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University. The data were from the students' cumulative GPA and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) responded by the students. The collected data were analyzed statistically by correlation analysis. In terms of the description of the students' happiness level, the result of the data analysis showed that 74% of the students were in "Somewhat Unhappy" category, suggesting that the students were not quite happy. That was probably due to the academic load they had as a student considering the fact that as the 7th-semester students, they had to start thinking and doing their final project as the requirement to complete their undergraduate study. However, their academic achievement showed that they were in "Excellent" and "Very Good" categories, showing that they still managed to do their best as students. For the result of the correlation analysis, however, the finding showed that there was a weak, negative, and not significant correlation between the students' happiness level and their academic achievement. In other words, their academic achievement was not determined by their happiness; they kept working on their best to manage their academic lives regardless of what level of happiness they had.

Keywords: *happiness level, GPA, academic achievement, EFL students*

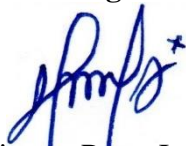
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem of the study, the objective of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

People experience many emotions in their lives and probably have several emotions occurring at once. Each emotion interacts with one or more other emotions. The interaction among emotions will potentially cause each emotion to stop, start, fade or increase (Pettinelli, 2012). According to Tabbodi et al. (2015), there are two types of emotion: negative emotion and positive emotion. Negative emotion can be categorized into concepts such as guilt, shame, sadness, anger, anxiety, depression, and jealousy, while positive emotion can be categorized into concepts such as pleasure, satisfaction, pride, love, joy, passion, and happiness.

One of the positive emotions is happiness (Ackerman, 2020). Happiness is a broad concept that refers to people's subjective evaluations of their level of well-being in their lives (Diener & Ryan, 2009). Veenhoven et al. (2009) refer to happiness as the degree of positive evaluation of a person's life as a whole. It is also the state of mind or the sense of pleasure and tranquility which brings to the improvement of self-function (Puspitorini, 2012). Happy individuals will get serenity in their lives so that they feel valuable for themselves and others. Because of that, it is worth saying that happiness is everybody's main goal in life.

To be happy, there are some aspects of happiness that an individual has to fulfill. According to Shave and Feedman (as cited in Hurlock (1997), there are three aspects of happiness: acceptance, affection, and achievement. Acceptance is how individuals perceive themselves and do not compare their lives to others; happiness depends on how individuals receive and enjoy their lives. Affection is the state of emotion arising from the acceptance of other people towards themselves; the better a person received by others, the more affection is expected. The more affection

individuals feel, the more happiness they experience. Achievement is when a person achieves his or her goals of life; happiness will be created along with the achievements he or she makes. For example, when a student gets a good grade at the end of semester, he or she will be happy. It means that one of his or her academic achievements has been fulfilled.

According to APA Dictionary of Psychology (APA, 2015), academic achievement is any identifiable success in the areas of scholarship or disciplined study. It is the degree to which an individual has met particular expectations that were the focus of activities in educational settings, such as kindergarten, college, and university (Steinmayr et al., 2014). It is the percentage of students at a school whose learning currently meets or exceeds their grade-level standards (Minnesota Department of Education (2017). It is also one of the indicators in assessing the progress of students in learning by looking at the final result of the teaching and learning process (Khoshnam & Gendavani, 2013). In other words, academic achievement provides information about students' mastery of lessons. By measuring academic achievement, it will be known what should be evaluated, fixed, and improved for the betterment of students or even schools or education itself (Khoshnam & Gendavani, 2013).

Academic achievement is not only affected by knowledge and information processing, but also by motivational factors such as beliefs, attitudes, and values (Bessant, 1995). According to Rastogi (2012), the factors which influence academic achievement can be categorized into three types, namely, intellectual, environmental, and emotional. The intellectual ability has a strong influence on academic achievement (Veas et al., 2016). The environment has a close relation and a positive influence on academic achievement (Lwin & Cho, 2020), while emotional intelligence has an important role not only in the academic field but also in the non-academic one (Anisa et al., 2019). Happiness is the example of emotional factor that influences academic achievement.

According to Seppälä (2016), students have to be happy in the classroom because happiness can be understood as “a state of heightened positive emotion.”

Instead of sidetracking the teaching and learning in the classroom, happiness can improve productivity and enhance social and emotional intelligence. It can be seen in the educational system in Finland. The Finnish approach of education is joy factor, the strategy in teaching as the class should feel pleasant, safe, and students get along well with others (Walker, 2017). By doing this, Finland consistently performed well on a set of international tests called PISA (Programme of International Student Assessment) (OECD, 2019).

In Indonesia, the joy factor is not the main focus in the teaching and learning process. For example, Prilianto (2019) found in his study which was conducted in one of the schools in Yogyakarta that there were still many students who did not enjoy the teaching and learning process; the students complained when the teachers gave them tasks and some of the students who lived in dormitory also felt uncomfortable because they were far from their parents. Prilianto (2019) also reported that some of the students did not know the reason why they went to school and what they wanted to do at school. These findings suggest that there is no joyful learning in the class, while on the other hand, the teaching and learning process is supposed to be pleasant and safe. Joyful learning will encourage students to use their perception, thought, and feeling in finding and building their understanding of what they learn (Kwartolo, 2007). That is why students have to be happy in the learning process. They will be more active in the class, far from stress and anxiety, and have a high life expectancy (O'Rourke & Cooper, 2010). These positive effects result in a good academic performance (Turashvili & Japaridze, 2012). Otherwise, if students are unhappy, it causes negative effects such as school refusal (Ampuni & Andayani, 2007) and academic procrastination (Shah et al., 2017). These negative effects will influence academic achievement. Hence, happiness is one of the factors that influence students' academic achievement.

There are many studies that investigated the relationship between happiness and academic achievement. For example, Tabbodi et al. (2015) who investigated the relationship between happiness and academic achievement by involving the students of Islamic Azad University of Shiraz Iran, found that there was a

significant positive relationship between happiness and academic achievement of the students. The study conducted by Ismail (2020) who investigated the relationship between happiness and academic performance among children of two primary schools in Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur showed that happiness had a significant relationship with academic performance. Next, La Olo's study (2018) found that there was a relationship between happiness and academic achievement of the high school students in the Bone Bolango regency of Gorontalo. All the studies show that students' happiness should be considered in improving the students' academic performance.

However, there are also previous studies that found no relationship between happiness and academic achievement. As Affandi et al. (2020) reported, their study which was conducted involving the fourth to sixth-grade primary school students in Mataram, Indonesia, found that happiness could not be used as a variable that explained the students' learning outcomes (academic achievement). Likewise, the study conducted by Fathoni (2018) who got involved with the eight grade students of one junior high school in Yogyakarta, also found that there was no significant correlation between students' academic achievement and happiness.

The previous studies conducted by Ismail (2020), La Olo (2018), Affandi et al. (2020), and Fathoni (2018), investigating the relationship between students' happiness and academic achievement were conducted by having secondary school students as the participants. This present study focused on investigating the relationship between happiness and academic achievement by having university students as the participants since the study of these two variables is limited in the university level, especially in the university in South Sumatera. Therefore, this present study investigated the relationship between happiness and academic achievement of the 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University. This study got involved the 7th semester students because as university students, they have experienced more academic life than the secondary school students. Moreover, university students tend to experience stress related to changes in lifestyle, new

responsibilities, and increased workload (Bulo & Sanchez, 2014). The second reason is that as the 7th semester students, they are expected to do their research as the requirement to complete their undergraduate study. As reported by Nuraeny (2016), managing positive emotions such as happiness, motivation and optimism are very important so that they are able to avoid negative emotions (stress, anxiety, and hopelessness) which can distract them in writing their thesis.

By considering what were reported by the scholars in their studies and also the two reasons described in the previous paragraph, this present study which is entitled "The Correlation between Happiness Level and Academic Achievement of the 7th Semester Students of English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University" was conducted to find out the level of happiness of the 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University and whether or not there was a significant correlation between their happiness and academic achievement.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problem of this present study was formulated in the following research questions:

- 1) What was the level of happiness of the 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University?
- 2) Was there any significant correlation between happiness and academic achievement of the 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

- 1) To find out the level of happiness of the 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Sriwijaya University.
- 2) To find out whether or not there was a significant correlation between happiness and academic achievement of the 7th semester students of the Faculty of Teacher

Training and Education of English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Previous studies have shown that happiness is one of the factors that plays an important role in students' academic lives. The conduct of this present study can enrich and give a significant contribution to the existing literature since this present study got involved university students as the participants, whereas the existing literature shows that the previous studies were mostly done with the secondary school students as the participants. In addition, this present study can fill in the gap of the limited literature concerning this topic within the context of the Indonesian educational setting.

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