ANALYSIS OF FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STUDENT ANXIETY WHEN FACING THE FINAL PROJECT IN THE ERA OF EDUCATIONAL DIGITALIZATION

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the contributing factors to student anxiety during the completion of their final project. The anxiety is influenced by a combination of internal factor such as low self-confidence, perfectionist tendencies, lack of motivation, and fear of unsatisfactory outcomes. And the external factors including the role of academic supervisors, time pressure, peer pressure, limited access to data, and institutional demands. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach through interview and observation involving students from various universities. The finding indicates that anxiety frequently arises during the early stages of the final project, particularly when defining the research title and direction. The effect of anxiety span both psychological and physical aspects, including sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, and emotional instability. Students tend to adopt coping strategies such as time management, relaxing activities, and seeking social support to deal with their anxiety. The study recommends institutional and academic mentor support to facilitate a more effective and less stressful final project experience.

Keywords: Student Anxiety, Final Project, Internal Factor, External Factor, Coping Strategies

Introduction

Universities are places of higher education where students are called university student. In the final stage of the lecture, students are required to complete the final project to obtain a bachelor's degree. Completing the final project is a requirement that must be fulfilled and the biggest demand for students. In completing the final project, there are several problems that often arise, namely students having determined the title, difficulty finding reference, lack of supporting data, unsolved administration, specified time and other problems (Firmansyah et al., 2021). This problem can cause psychological disorders, resulting in stress, loss of motivation, and depression which have an impact on the completion of the final project, which is delayed, cause anxiety disorders.

Anxiety is an unpleasant emotion, characterized by terms such as worry, concern, and fear experienced in varying degrees (Hidayati, 2022). Students often feel anxiety disorders due to pressures that come from internal and external factors. Internal factors that cause anxiety are lack of interest or self-motivation, low academic ability and lack of student interest in research. Meanwhile, external factors come from outside students such as difficulty finding ideas or problems to be researched, supervisors who are difficult to meet and several times advised to change the title (Putri & Akbar, 2022)

Anxiety makes them feel depressed and have difficulty solving problems in the process of working on their final project. Although anxiety is a natural thing experienced by humans, if it is not addressed immediately, it can cause irrational and protracted disorders that result in the completion of the final project. Everyone has different level of anxiety, depending on how the person adjust to the conditions

that trigger the anxiety (Sitorus & Simbolon, 2023) If a person can adjust the anxiety well, it can be handled well and otherwise it can inhibit daily activities.

In recent years, research on academic anxiety among students has been significant development. A study by Novita Sari (2021) focused her research on the dynamics of anxiety among Islamic counseling and guidance student who faced difficulty in meeting their supervisors, finding literature and balancing their time between final assignment and other activities. The coping strategies identified this study were divided into problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies. A more recent study by Puti Febina Niko (2024), highlights pressure from social environment such as family and faculty as triggers for maladaptive perfectionism that exacerbates anxiety. This study also highlights the role of experience and future uncertainly as important variables contributing to academic anxiety. This study offers a more comprehensive approach by identifying and analyzing internal and external factors that contribute to student anxiety, as well as exploring effective strategies used by students to overcome it. Therefore, this study aims to further identify the factors that cause student anxiety and the solutions that can be done to overcome this anxiety.

Methods

This study uses qualitative research with methods of literature study, interview and direct observation of student who are currently working on or have complete their final project. The literature study based on empirical data published on journal such as Google Scholar, Mendeley and Research Gate.

Literature Study

Literature study is a crucial first step in the research process aimed at gaining a deep theoretical understanding and conceptual framework regarding the research topic. In the context of this study, the literature review was conducted by searching for and collecting various relevant reference sources related to the issue of student anxiety in completing their final assignments. These sources can come from scientific books, journal articles, previous research results, academic reports, and credible digital publications on the internet.

Through this process, researchers can identify the main theories, basic concepts, and previous findings related to the factors causing anxiety, whether psychological, academic, or social. Literature review not only serves to strengthen the research background but also helps formulate the problem focus and enrich the analytical framework. The output of this stage is the collection of valid and relevant references, which form the conceptual foundation for examining and explaining the phenomenon of student anxiety when facing the preparation of final assignments.

Interview

Interviews, as explained by Esterberg (2002), are an interpersonal communication process involving a meeting between two parties the interviewer and the informant to exchange information, views, and experiences through systematic questioning techniques. In the context of this study, interviews are positioned as an important method for exploring in depth the various factors that influence students' anxiety when they are in the process of completing their final assignments. Through this direct interaction, researchers not only collect descriptive data but also gain contextual and emotional understanding of students' subjective experiences. The interview results are then analyzed and constructed to identify specific patterns related to internal and external stressors, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the psychological dynamics experienced by students as they face their final assignments.

Observation

Observation is usually defined as a method or approach to collecting information or data through observation and documentation of observed phenomena. In other words, observation is carried out to obtain information about the behavior of the people observing it. Therefore, observation allows for a clearer understanding of social life, which is difficult to achieve

through other approaches. If observation does not yet provide much information about the issue being investigated, it is very important for gaining a clear understanding of the issue and directions for solving it. Through this observation technique, researchers observed how anxious students were when completing their final assignments.

Result and Discussion
Result

Based on interview and direct observation of student who are currently working on or have completing their final project, it can be stated that some students experience feelings of anxiety, confusion and fear. However, there are also some students who feel excited and happy, or even feel normal when they start working on their final projects. Some factors that are felt when first starting to work on a final project include confusion about finding a title and background, confusion about where to start and even fear of going in the wrong direction. The anxiety felt by students typically manifest in various ways. Student may feel anxious due to their academic advisors, the time required to complete the thesis and supporting components such as journals or data that are either insufficient or fail to meet criteria. The primary cause of anxiety among student also stems from within themselves; they often lack confidence, feel need to be perfectionism and worry that their work may not meet expectations. The role of the thesis advisor also influences the completions of the final project. Some students feel supported by the feedback, advice and input from their thesis advisor, but others feel pressured, leading to anxiety due to the advisor's lack of responsiveness and the imposition of demands that are quite difficult to fulfill. Some students also feel pressured from their peers' achievement. However, others are motivated to quickly complete their final projects. This anxiety also affects students' sleep quality and eating patterns. Some students experience poor sleep quality, even insomnia, while others lose their appetite. Some students have ways to manage their emotions and blockages when completing their final project. Some choose to calm themselves, take breaks from writing by doing "me time" activities or hanging out with friends or even read other references to gain new insight for completing their final project according to the criteria. They also employ effective strategies to reduce anxiety, such as setting completion schedule or target, ensuring adequate sleep, seeking a comfortable environment, and focusing on themselves and guidance from their academic advisors, thereby avoiding feelings or anxiety.

Discussion

The discussion in this study is based on research questions that refer to data obtained from interviews with students who are currently working or have completing their final project. There is a main theme, namely the factors that cause anxiety in students, the impact of anxiety and the effective strategies used by students to manage and reduce anxiety, which form the basis of the discussion in this study:

1. Student Anxiety Factors

   The factors causing student anxiety are divided into two categories: internal factors and external factors. Internal factors originate from within the individuals, such as difficulty in formulating problem, organizing thesis content, writing techniques, research methods, data collections and difficulty in translating idea into writing. External factors, on the other hands, originate from outside the individual, such as complex graduation requirement, thesis advisor and examiner, working while studying, parental expectations and time require to write the thesis (Wakhyudin et al., 2020). In general, the factors that cause anxiety in students are difficulties in adjusting.

   Based on interviews and observations of several students, there are several factors causing anxiety when completing their final projects. Some internal factors include difficulty in determining the title and background and fear of going off track in writing the final project. Lack of self-confidence and perfectionism also contribute to student' anxiety. External factors causing anxiety among students stem from the pressure of having an advisor who is difficult to work with and unresponsive to students' messages during guidance session. Student also feel pressured by the tight deadlines given to complete their final projects. Additionally, some students feel anxious and left behind due to the influence of their peers who can complete their final project quickly.

2. Impact of Student Anxiety

Anxiety affects behavioral changes such as withdrawing from the environment, difficulty focusing on activities, loss of appetite, irritability, low anger control, illogicality, and difficulty sleeping (Jarnawi, 2020). The impact of frequent anxiety is when individuals experienced increased psychological reactions by thinking excessively that something bad will happen in their lives in the future (Noviyanti, 2020). The negative effects of anxiety include feeling of anxiety, fear and lack of confidence in certain situations, such as appear in public. The impact of anxiety experienced by student who are working on their final projects is that they are unable to complete their final project as well as expected, which can cause student who are writing their thesis to be risk of not graduating on time, leading to concern about their future, despair and even suicide due to depression(Firmansyah et al., 2021).

Based on interviews and observations of several students, the effects of anxiety include poor sleep quality, irregular eating pattern, and eating disorders. Some students who experienced anxiety while completing their final projects suffer from sleep disturbances and bad sleep quality, even leading to insomnia. Anxiety can also cause mood changes such as increased sensitivity, easy fatigue, and reluctance to engage in other activities.

3.   Effective Strategy to Reduce Student Anxiety

In overcoming anxiety, there are several affective strategies that can be used such as through personal internal strategies by loving yourself, practicing self-reward, and avoiding stress. External strategies can include meeting with close relatives and contacting professional expert who can help minimize anxiety experienced by students (Sani et al., 2022). The way to reduce the burden on students when doing their final projects is basically the same, which is to go out with friends who are also experiencing difficulties in completing their final project. Coping strategies are strategies for managing behavior to solve problems in the simplest most realistic way possible, serving to free oneself from both imaginary and real problems. Coping has a very important meaning and indicates an effort to escape and try to find solutions to every problem that exist (Irda Sari, 2020).

Based on interviews and observations of student experiencing anxiety, they use different strategies to manage their anxiety. Some students make a list of activities to do to achieve their goals in completing their final assignment. Others choose to sleep, go for walk, such as going out for coffee with friends, find a comfortable atmosphere or even choose to relax

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that student anxiety in completing final projects is a complex and multifaceted issue, influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Internal factors include low self-confidence, perfectionist tendencies, lack of motivation, and fear of producing unsatisfactory work. External factors include the role of academic advisors, time constraints, peer pressure, limited access to data or resources, and institutional demands. The initial stage of working on the final project—especially in determining a title, background, and direction—was found to be the most anxiety-inducing. Students commonly feel overwhelmed due to unclear expectations and unfamiliar academic demands. Furthermore, the relationship between students and academic supervisors plays a significant role in either reducing or increasing anxiety. Supportive, communicative supervisors help students feel more confident and guided, while unresponsive or overly demanding supervisors contribute to greater pressure and stress.

The impact of this anxiety is not only psychological but also physical. Many students report sleep disturbances, appetite loss, and emotional instability during the final project period. These symptoms, if left unmanaged, may hinder the successful and timely completion of academic tasks.

Despite these challenges, students employ a variety of coping strategies to manage their anxiety. These include time management, taking breaks, self-rewarding activities, seeking emotional support, and focusing on personal progress rather than external comparisons. Such strategies help students maintain emotional balance and academic motivation.

This study highlights the urgent need for institutions to provide structured psychological support, such as mentoring programs, academic counseling, and stress management training. Educators and academic advisors must also be more aware of the emotional and psychological needs of students during the thesis process to foster a more supportive academic environment.

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