

ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT DIFFERENCES OF ENGLISH STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study was aimed at finding to find out whether there is any significant academic achievement difference of the fifth and seventh semester of English students based on their achievement motivation. This research used ex-post facto design. From data analysis using inferential statistics--T-test for independent samples with statistical analysis tool, SPSS 18, it was found that there was a significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester of English students based on their achievement motivation. Conversely, there is no significant academic achievement difference of the seventh semester of English students based on their achievement motivation. It means that the level of achievement motivation did not contribute significantly on the level of students' academic achievement.

Key Words: *Academic Achievement Differences, Achievement Motivation, English Students*

INTRODUCTION

Learning plays an important role in human life. It is a process of change in human behaviour as a result of experience (Suryabrata, 2006: 231; Hadis, 2008: 60; & Syarifudin et.al, 2010: 26). One thing that should be noticed is that the successful of learning is indicated by behavioural changes whether it is human development, habits, attitudes, beliefs, goals, personality, and even human perception (Purwanto, 2006: 85).

In school, particularly in a college, the behavioural change is shown by the academic achievement gotten by the students. It is the degree of students' proficiency in a certain field of study (Scagliol cited in Nengsi, 2012: 13;

Sukmadinata, 2005: 102), gotten from tests given and rated by the teacher and indicated by marks, numbers or letters, stated in grade transcript. College students' success in following their study or academic duty in every semester is shown by Grade Point Average (GPA) that is a measure of how well students are doing in their academic studies, and cumulative GPA that is a calculation of the average of all students' grades for all semesters and courses completed. Therefore, the academic achievement indicates the degree of success or the failure of the college students following the process indicated by GPA given in their study report.

Since the academic achievement is gotten based on the learning process experienced by students, it is influenced by several factors arise through the process (Purwanto, 2007: 106). The factors in general are divided into internal factors—those that derive from the students themselves or what students have with them, inside of their body, to learning situation—and external factors—those coming around the students in learning process (Hadis, 2008: 63). One of the internal factors determining students' academic achievement is achievement motivation (Djaali, 2008: 103; Awan, Noureen & Naz, 2011: 72; Onete *et.al*, 2012: 64). It is defined as a mental power that drives students to do any activities related to learning—e.g. intense, prolonged and repeated effort to accomplish something difficult— better, quicker, more effective, and more efficient to achieve a standard excellence of achievement (McClelland cited in Sobur, 2003: 287; Murray cited in Kolodziej, 2010: 42; Harre & Lamb, 1996:1). Slavin (2011:111) simplifies that achievement motivation is general tendency to strive for success (a hope for success), and fear of failure.

It is agreed that achievement motivation of a student greatly contributes to his or her own academic achievement (Veena & Shastri, 2013: 254). It influences the behaviour of the students in learning. The accomplishing to the standard of excellence shown in students' desire to accomplish something difficult, attain a high standard of success, master complex tasks, and surpass others (Mc-Clelland cited in Awan, Noureen, & Naz, 2011: 72). Moreover, highly achievement motivated students like the situation or task that demands personal responsibility or results, not on the basis of fate, and chance; they choose a realistic but challenging goals rather than the goal that is easily achieved or too risky; they

look for a job or a situation where he obtained immediate and real feedback to determine whether the results of his works are satisfied or not; they feel happy to work alone; they compete to outperform others (Djaali, 2008:109); they are able to defer gratification desire for a better future; they are not motivated to just get money, status, or other benefits (Djaali, 2008:109); there is a tendency to choose friends who are good at doing complicated tasks; they will last longer to accomplish specific tasks; they will link their failure with the lack of efforts rather than external factors; when they fail, they will multiply their efforts until they are really successful in that task (Slavin, 2011:111); they seek out challenging but moderately difficult tasks (Elliot, 1996:337; Slavin, 2011:111; Aydin & Coşkun, 2011:122), do well at them, want all possible feedback, and become bored with steady success.

All of their deeds or attitudes shown in those characteristics of highly achievement motivated students are the manifestations of their feelings—strive for success and fear of failure. Consequently, they should have achieved better than those with low achievement motivation. However, students are influenced by a need to achieve to a certain degree or in different level (Zenzen, 2002:7). Some students have a need to achieve in all that they do. Their desire for success drives them to accomplish every task, no matter what the task is, or the difficulties involved in completing it. Other students may also need for success, but consider the value of the task before completing it. Some others may or may not be capable, plod on with their tasks. Some achieve accomplishment, others do not. Then, there were students who chose not to do the task. Some students were afraid they would not be able to accomplish the task. They had a fear of failure. Rather

than face the humiliation of not being able to complete the task, thus failing the task, these students chose not to do the task at all (Veena & Shastri, 2013:254). Thus, some students achieve success, attain good achievement, and some others get low achievement or fail in their academic life.

Students differ in their need of achievement in how much achievement means to them. Some students react to failure as if they were being judged and discredited, while others view failure as an opportunity for learning (Elliot, 1996: 336-337). Those two groups of students focus on different goals, and their reactions to the similar events are different. Students who have high motivation to achieve generally do well academically. Students with low motivation do not do well academically (Zenzen, 2002: 8). Subsequently, as found by McClland, Morgan, and Lovells cited in Onete, Edet, Udey & Ogbor (2012: 68) that students with high achievement motivation out-perform those with low achievement motivation.

Moreover, schools, include college, consist largely of achievement situation, the need of achievement or achievement motivation is triggered quite often (Steinmayr & Spinath, 2009: 81). Since accomplishments in schools can only be achieved by learning or fulfilling the demands of schools, students high on need achievement are supposed to work hard to achieve and achieve better. However, the phenomena showed that some students seemed lazy in doing tasks, procrastinating (Warsiyah, 2013: 20), or doing their tasks perfunctorily, and even copying their friends' tasks in the earlier morning before the class begins or cheating in their tasks and tests (Friyatmi, 2011: 174). Their deeds showed that the students do not have high achievement motivation, but they still get good achievement.

In short, the need of achievement determines students' success or failure academically. Recent studies showed that achievement motivation were associated positively with academic success (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000; Ahmad & Rana, 2012). Since the levels of the achievement motivation from one student and others are different, the academic achievements should be different too. Thus, the present study is objected to find out the academic achievement differences of English students based on their achievement motivation. It is an attempt to answer the question, "Is there any significant difference of students' academic achievement based on their achievement motivation?" Two null and alternative hypotheses are set out as the following.

1. H_{01} = There is no significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation
2. H_{a1} = There is a significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation
1. H_{02} = There is no significant academic achievement difference of the Seventh semester English students based on their achievement motivation
2. H_{a2} = There is a significant academic achievement difference of the Seventh semester English students based on their achievement motivation

METHODS

The participants of this research were the fifth and seventh semester students of English department of STAIN Batusangkar in 2013/2014 academic year. The samples consisted of

122 students that taken by applying proportional stratified random sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2010). Those students have different levels of academic achievement. The achievement motivation levels of the students were assessed by using a questionnaire developed from the characteristics of highly achievement motivated students with Cronbach's Alpha 0.940. The questionnaire consisted of 65 statements. Responses on various achievement motivation characteristics were expressed on a 5-points scale (*strongly appropriate to strongly inappropriate*). Each statement was graded based on the scale considering the positive and negative form of the statement. The data of students' academic achievement were gotten from Academics Office of STAIN Batusangkar in form of the tabulation of students' GPA and cumulative GPA.

To test the hypotheses, the data were analyzed using inferential statistics analysis. In this process, t_{test} was used to find out the difference between highly achievement motivated students' academic achievement and lowly achievement motivated students' academic achievement. The first step to follow was to find the highly and lowly achievement motivated students. It means the students were divided into two categories based on the median of achievement motivation scores gotten from the questionnaire. The categories were highly achievement motivated students for those got greater than or equal to the median score and lowly achievement motivated students for those got under the median score of their achievement motivation (Aspin, 2007: 48). The former was coded as 1 and the later was coded as 2 for they were computed using SPSS 18. Then, the mean of academic achievements of both groups were compared using t-test for independent sample through SPSS 18 package program. The coefficient of t-

test was then compared to the t-table at the level of significance 5%.

RESULTS

The difference of academic achievement of the Fifth semester of English Students

H_{o1} = *There is no significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation*

H_{a1} = *There is a significant academic achievement difference of fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation*

Based on the calculation of students' achievement motivation questionnaire, the median score of the fifth than or equal to 254.50 of their achievement motivation score were grouped into highly semester students' achievement motivation was 254.50. Therefore, students having greater achievement motivated students, coded as 1, while the rest of them were classified into lowly achievement motivated students, coded as 2 as displayed in the following table.

Table 1: *Classification of the 5th Semester Students' Academic Achievement based on Their Achievement Motivation*

Ach. Motivation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
High	31	3.4832	.27249	.04894
Low	31	3.3223	.27455	.04931

The table described that the total of highly achievement motivated students was as many as the total of the lowly achievement motivated students that was 31 students. The mean score of the academic achievement of the first group was 3.4832 while the second group's mean score was 3.3223.

To explore the significance of differences on academic achievement

between highly and lowly achievement motivated students, t-test for independent sample was computed then, the results are presented in the following table.

Table 2: *t-Test Analysis of the 5th Semester Students*

df	t_0	t_t	Level of Significance	Remarks
60	2.317	2.00	5%	H_{01} rejected, H_{a1} accepted

The table clearly indicated that the score gotten from the calculation or $t_0/t_{calculated}$ was 2.317. Then, the significance of difference was found by comparing t_0 and t_t . To find t_t , the degree of freedom (df) was calculated first, $N-2$ ($62-2$) = 60. Thus, the coefficient of t_t was 2.00 for significance level at 0.05 margin of error. It could be interpreted that H_{a1} was accepted because t_0 was higher than t_t . It means there is a significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation.

The difference of academic achievement of the seventh semester of English Students

H_{02} = *There is no significant academic achievement difference of the seventh semester English students based on their achievement motivation*

H_{a2} = *There is a significant academic achievement difference of seventh semester English students based on their achievement motivation.*

The score of the seventh semester students' achievement motivation was calculated, and the median score gotten was 244.00. Thus, students who had greater than or equal to the median score of their achievement motivation were grouped into highly achievement

motivated students (1) while the rest of them were classified into lowly achievement motivated students (2) as seen in the following table.

Table 3: *Classification of the 7th Semester Students' Academic Achievement based on Their Achievement Motivation*

Ach. Motivation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
High	30	3.42	.312	.057
Low	30	3.36	.291	.053

The table presented that the total of highly achievement motivated students was as many as the total of lowly achievement motivated students, 30 students. The mean score of academic achievements of both groups were compared using t-test for independent sample through SPSS 18. The coefficient of t-test had been calculated. The following table showed the results.

Table 4: *T-test Analysis of the 7th Semester Students*

df	t_0	t_t	Level of Significance	Remarks
58	0.758	2.00	5%	H_0 accepted, H_a rejected

The table presented that there were 60 students as the sample of the seventh semester students. Different from the fifth semester students, the value of t_0 gotten was 0.758. The coefficient of this t-test was compared with t_t . To find t_t , the researcher had to find the degree of freedom that was 58. However, there is no value for degree of freedom 58, so the the closer degree of freedom, 60, was taken. The result showed that t_0 , 0.758, was lower than t_t , 2.00 for significance level at 0.05 margin of error. It could be interpreted that H_{02} was accepted because t_0 was smaller than t_t . Thus, there is no significant academic achievement difference of English students of the seventh semester based on their achievement motivation.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research showed that there is a significant difference of academic achievement between the lowly and highly achievement motivated students for significance level at 0.05 margin of error. This finding confirms many other research findings in this area such as Sriati (2004), Awan, Noureen, & Naz (2011), Klausmeier in Djaali (2008) who revealed that achievement motivation significantly influence students' academic achievement. In addition, the differences in achievement motivation intensity are shown in various levels of achievement attained by various students. McClelland (1985); Morgan (1986) and Lovells' (1982) (cited in Onete, Edet, Udey & Ogbor, 2012: 68) revealed that the academic performance of students is a function of achievement motivation, with students high in achievement motivation outperforming those with low achievement motivation. This finding also corroborates that of Tella's (2007) finding that highly motivated students perform better academically than the lowly motivated students.

This finding shows that achievement motivation is one of the predictive factors to determine students' achievement. It is supported by Djaali (2008: 10) that the difference in achievement motivation intensity leads to the difference level of achievement achieved by the students. It is because the achievement motivation drives the students to select any activities that could direct them achieving success, and outperforming others (Djiwandono, 2006: 354). Thus, these arguments confirm the alternative hypothesis of this study that the difference in achievement motivation leads to the difference of academic achievement gotten by students.

Furthermore, the findings of this research indicated that the academic

achievement of the seventh semester students was not different significantly based on their achievement motivation for significance level at 0.05 margin of error. The finding of the seventh semester students confirms the result found by Onete, Edet, Udey & Ogbor (2012) that there was no significant influence of academic achievement motivation level on the academic performance of education. They had proved that achievement motivation did not significantly contribute to the academic achievement. Rosen (cited in Onete, Edet, Udey & Ogbor, 2012: 77) also found that there was no significant relationship was observed between academic achievement motivation and the subjects' academic performance.

Apart from the relationship and the influence, Veena & Shastri (2013:56) found that there was no significant difference in achievement motivation between highly and lowly academic achievement students. Thus, it can be implied that since there is no significant achievement difference between both groups implies that there will be no significant difference of the academic achievement based on the achievement motivation.

Some reasons may contribute for this finding. Firstly, Onete, Edet, Udey & Ogbor (2012: 77-78) argue that the students may have merely expressed their desire to such level of achievement without taking into cognizance their academic ability based on their previous performances. In this circumstance, their perceived achievement motivation has no relationship with their actual academic performance. Those with low achievement motivation levels may have considered their earlier academic performance and responded appropriately to the items.

Other reason that could contribute to support this finding is that there are other factors that more significantly

differentiate students' academic achievement. Sriati (2004: 14-15) studying the influence of self-concept and achievement motivation toward students' academic achievement found that self-concept more significantly influence academic achievement than achievement motivation. Awan, Noureen, & Naz (2011: 78) also found that self-concept influences more than double students' academic achievement than achievement motivation.

Moreover, learning achievement is also highly influenced by the system of assessment made by the lecturers. Mustikawan (2013: 92) argues that the evaluation use influences on students' achievement. Assessment systems that are not clear causes the results of assessment are also not clear. In addition, based on his research he discovered that educational assessment was not handled professionally. The preparation of the specifications, the instruments, and the review were carried out in only a short time and in a hurry. Furthermore, he found that the assessment planning was not done well even validation problem was not considered, so that it impacts on students' achievement (Mustikawan, 2013: 92-102). The researcher assumes that even though a student has a high achievement motivation, but the evaluation is not conducted in accordance with the circumstances that it should, then the achievement motivation becomes not significantly influence the achievement. As an example, students who have high achievement motivation shown by its activity in the learning process, the fulfillment of tasks, etc., but the lecturers do not make a clear assessment. Possibly, it allows the students to obtain a low learning achievement while lowly achievement motivated students may get better grades. In continuous time, it will lead to achievement motivation of the students

becomes decreased and even is considered not important anymore.

Furthermore, achievement motivation of students should be controlled by a good morality. Mulyasa in Rizkanaya (2012: 7) argues that students who have good achievement motivation but have not yet matched by moral or do not have good '*akhlaq*' will direct them to behave badly. Since motivation has an important influence on learning that is it directs and controls students in completing a task or achieving specific goals they desire (Putranto, 2010: 147), not having good *akhlaq* may lead the students to behave unfair.

One of the reflections of behaving unfair is cheating. According to the research done by Warsiyah (2013: 20), cheating behavior is closely related with evaluation in the learning process, and also cannot be separated from the behavior of students who like to procrastinate in the learning and academic tasks. Procrastinating habit causes them to take a shortcut to cheat. As a result of this behavior, the grade of students who really master the material cannot be differentiated from those who do not.

Regarding to the different finding of the fifth and the seventh semester, the researcher made an assumption. As stated by Moore (2010: 25) that highly achievement motivated students have strong desire to surpass others. It means that among the highly achievement motivated students, the sense of competition is created. As data found, it showed that the mean score of achievement motivation of the fifth semester students (255.19) was higher than the seventh semester students' (253.33). It implies that the sense of competition in the learning process is lower in the older semester students. It may be because they had interacted for a long time and found that they did not

need to compete with each other. This situation allows negative behavior such as cheating happens because the students did not have a big desire to outperform others. What important is that they get something in equal, the feeling of togetherness. Therefore, achievement motivation did not significantly differentiate students' academic achievement of the seventh semester students.

Apart from possible factors mentioned earlier, students' academic achievement difference based on their achievement motivation difference may need further investigation. It might be important to test whether every semester students have different level of achievement motivation. Even though, there was no difference found of the seventh semester, it is not even suggested that the achievement motivation is not important at all as a predictor of students' academic achievement.

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CONCLUSION

This research investigated the academic achievement differences of the fifth and the seventh semester students based on their achievement motivation. By using inferential analysis, the difference means of the highly achievement motivated students of the fifth semester students indicated that there is a significant academic achievement difference of the fifth semester English students based on their achievement motivation for significance level at 0.05 margin of error. However, the difference is not significant for the seventh semester students. It does not mean that the achievement motivation does not contribute to the academic achievement. There is a difference even it is not significant. It is suggested that the educators facilitate and make learning situation that could build up students' achievement motivation, and consider other factors influencing students' academic achievement.

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