

Doing Thesis While Working Part Time, Why Not? A Case Study of Self-Efficacy in College Students

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ARTICLE INFO

Article

History

Received : 2025-02-19

Revised : 2025-04-16

Accepted : 2025-04-18

Keywords

College Students

Final Year Students

Part-Time Students

Self-Efficacy

ABSTRACT

Many individuals fail to achieve their goals because of their low self-efficacy. This research was initiated from a case that many researchers found in the surrounding environment, especially the campus environment. Researchers often meet students who do part-time jobs in between their activities as students. This phenomenon makes researchers interested in conducting research on students who work part-time during the thesis preparation period to see how the student's self-efficacy is. The research then uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, with the subject collection technique using purposive sampling technique, with data collection using interviews. The results showed that the subject under study was able to achieve all aspects of self-efficacy. The subjects succeeded in motivating and convincing themselves that they could by managing their time well, not giving up easily and being confident that they would graduate even with a busy schedule. And find a way to get up and succeed in completing their assignments.

Introduction

Students are part of a group of people who are placed in two roles, namely young people and intellectual candidates so they must be able to think critically about social reality even though they often do not measure the risks that might befall them (Situmorang, 2019; Liu, et al, 2019). At the end of the stage in education that a student takes, there will be a final project called a thesis. Indonesia itself uses the term thesis in representing original written works as the output of students while carrying out education in their scientific fields (Hamid, 2007; Burnette, et al, 2019; Wei, et al, 2020). Students who write a thesis are considered as individuals who are qualified in combining their knowledge and skills in the process of understanding, analyzing, describing and explaining the problems that are the requirements for obtaining a bachelor's degree following the scientific field.

A fact reveals that students who are completing thesis assignments often face challenges, obstacles, and difficulties that cause them to experience high levels

of stress. This is supported by research by Kriswanti, et al, (2020) which found that completing a thesis is a task that is considered difficult for students and can cause stress. Based on research data from Rosyad (2019), some factors cause stress for students when they are preparing a thesis. These factors include a lack of interest in research, difficulty in determining the thesis title, anxiety when interacting with supervisors, and feeling depressed when seeing friends' progress in completing the thesis. All these inhibiting and stress-causing factors are challenges that students must face in the process of completing their thesis. Therefore, it is very important for students to have confidence in their own ability to face and overcome these factors. This self-confidence is known as self-efficacy, which is an individual's belief in their ability to achieve goals (Bandura, 1997; Wardana, et al, 2020).

The current phenomenon is that there are many students who double as workers and students in college. This is experienced by many students from the beginning of the lecture to the final period of the final project. The reasons vary until students choose to do this part-time job, ranging from the emergence of financial problems to the desire to fill spare time. Students' motivations also vary, ranging from wanting to help their parents to wanting to live independently to gain experience. To balance the two, students usually choose to do part-time work. This is because the part-time work schedule is flexible and can be done at any time so that the class schedule is not disturbed. However, based on the facts stated by Mardelina and Muhson (2017), there are possible obstacles, especially time management in completing studies, where students involved in part-time work cannot allocate their time between lectures, studies, and even rest, so their work will be difficult.

Based on previous research conducted by Tsabitah and Hasan (2022) on self-efficacy and learning motivation with academic stress of students working on theses where in working on theses it is likely that students will show symptoms of the onset of academic stress because there is a sense of pressure in themselves due to various factors such as gaps and demands of the situation and feeling unsure of themselves, so that self-efficacy can be an internal factor in students who can become a shield in the face of various difficulties in doing assignments can cause stress. Following research by Zhang and Yang (2020) on the effects of work on student academic performance, it was found that there may be positive effects such as the development of personal character, but in campus education it has a negative effect where there will be less time available for learning activities in campus, student performance in class will decrease and possibly even expelled. And the title of the research on the Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Thesis Anxiety in Nursing Students conducted by Saraswati et al (2021), there are problems with the

challenges felt by students during the Covid-19 pandemic making students anxious about their thesis, anxiety in compiling a thesis in this study shows a negative relationship with the level of student self-efficacy. Similar to relevant research, this study aims to describe the self-efficacy of students who work part-time when they must complete their final assignment obligations and the factors that influence the realisation of self-efficacy.

From the explanation that has been presented, the problem in this study is the split focus on students who work part-time between work focus and difficulty completing the final project, and students need high self-efficacy to be able to complete their final project. So, the purpose of this study is to describe the role of self-efficacy and factors that increase self-efficacy in students who work part-time while completing their final thesis.

Method

Penelitian ini merupakan riset kuantitatif eksperimen dengan *quasi*- This research uses a qualitative approach, with a case study design to explore a case in depth and then can be explored in more detail through sources of information that are rich in context (Creswell, 2015; Suud, et al, 2020; Zhang & Yang, 2020). This research approach was chosen to describe how self-efficacy in students who work part-time in the process of preparing a thesis is certainly unique to the case raised, besides that because the data will be obtained with naturalistic or natural methods, in accordance with existing conditions. The research was conducted online considering the location of the subjects who did come from different campuses. This is in line with the intention of Moleong (2010) where in choosing a research site the researcher may consider the essence and formulation of the problem to find out if there are similarities in the facts obtained in the field and facilitate the research process.

Taking subjects in this study using purposive techniques. According to Sugiyono (2017), purposive is done by taking samples that are sought after according to predetermined criteria based on research objectives. In this study, the criteria set by the researcher were: 1) Students who are in the final project or thesis preparation stage, 2) Students who work part-time, 3) Willing to provide an explanation with reference to the research objectives. The reference used by researchers in determining the sample size is on the adequacy of extracting information on the subject. Researchers used 4 subjects. The researcher then invited the subject to fill out an informed consent as proof that the participant was willing to become an informant in this study. Interviews were conducted online using zoom meetings. In conducting the interview, the researchers first agreed on the

time of the interview. the analysis carried out then went through 3 stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Results and Discussion

Subject 1

From the interview conducted on the first subject with the initials A, a description of self-efficacy in part-time working students in preparing a thesis is obtained by digging up information through three aspects of self-efficacy. In the magnitude aspect, Subject A always tries to be able to complete his thesis assignment and keep doing his part-time job because the thesis is important to be able to graduate from his lectures, and his work can help him fulfil his family's economy. In the generality aspect, A was able to complete both tasks at the same time because she had a well-organised schedule so that the tasks were still done and worked on time. However, there were challenges that she had to face, namely the lack of time for guidance and the deadline for revision given by the supervisor. In the strength aspect, A never gives up and always tries to solve all the problems that become challenges for her. Being optimistic and thinking of good things is the key to being able to continue to be enthusiastic.

"Both are mandatory things for me because both have to be done, the thesis to graduate from college and also work is also a must because I want to get a wage to help my family's economy.... By making a schedule my time can be arranged neatly and never get tired of working... No (giving up), I try to find a way out to solve the problems that occur. Because for me it is a challenge, so I don't want to give up" (Subject A, 2023).

Subject 2

The magnitude aspect in subject J is that he feels capable and motivated to be able to complete his thesis and work well. His work can also be adjusted to the thesis guidance time, so that his work will not interfere with lectures. If there are difficulties, subject J will immediately ask about it to friends and lecturers. In the generality aspect, subject J can divide the time when to work on thesis revisions and when to work. J often experiences confusion in understanding the intentions of the supervisor who provides revisions to his thesis. In the strength aspect, Subject J had experienced failure because he had to repeat his proposal from the beginning. Even though he felt lazy, the support from friends encouraged him to continue to struggle to complete his thesis.

"...Sometimes you get tired if you work in shifts, but if you can manage your time, you don't get tired, while working on your thesis. So, working in the library is flexible, if you don't come in, you just need to confirm with the head of the library. I also sometimes make a schedule if my revision is urgent. If there is no

revision, I work full time until the afternoon. Then 2 hours before the library closes, I usually reread my thesis ... I was lazy when I failed. But after I shared with my friends what was my burden they said "You have to accept it Jes, that's the result of the thesis for you. So, you must be enthusiastic and whatever your dosbing says you have to accept, because it's also for your good. When you don't do it, it's the same as failing your final project" (Subject J, 2023).

Subject 3

Subjects with the initials M in the magnitude aspect, often feel tired after returning from work, so that their thesis work is often delayed. M also found it difficult to contact the supervisor, and the determination of free time for M and the supervisor to meet. In the aspect of generality, subject M believes he can complete his assignments and work on the more important parts first according to him. Even so, he also had difficulty in dividing his time. Because he must balance his mood, fatigue from his work, and must complete his obligations, namely the thesis. Subject M was once at the stage of wanting to give up, this is expressed in the strength aspect, but that did not make him drag on the failures he had experienced. Because M considers that the failures that have been obtained are experiences to be successful in the end.

"...the problem is that from the internship I was tired, I couldn't do it so I went home already tired, so I couldn't do the thesis. If you're sure, you can, but sometimes there is a mood of its own if sometimes if the assignments are together, there is a time when we are tired, usually I will rest more ... it's more about dividing the time anyway. Like the priorities, the priority is the thesis but what do I do, there are other urgent works that must be completed at that time ... At first it was like wanting to blame yourself, but there are times when we can't accept the failure anyway. So, it's like just give it time. But don't let it drag on to that failure continuously" (Subject M, 2023).

Subject 4

The magnitude aspect in the subject with the initials H, every time he has difficulty, he will ask his friends for help. Although his work sometimes interferes with his lectures, H always tries to prioritise his thesis assignments. In the generality aspect, H was able to complete his assignments, even though he had difficulty in processing the data for his thesis assignment, he asked for help to be taught until he understood. In dividing his time, he prioritised which one he had to do first at that time. In the strength aspect, H does not give up easily and considers failure as a way for him to achieve success. And in the face of failure, he feels he must be ready to accept any consequences that exist later.

"...If there is something that I don't understand, I will ask for understanding from friends...". Yes, it is a little disturbing, but from the beginning I have asked permission from the owner of the warkop and asked for understanding from colleagues and the boss. I will do the assignment when the warkop is quiet... When I process data using SPSS because I use quantitative research. So, I asked to be taught by others, but I processed the data myself... No. I am a person who does not give up easily. I see failure as my way forward" (Subject H, 2023).

From the results of interviews with the four subjects above, in general, the subjects had difficulty in dividing time between work and their thesis assignments. However, this can still be overcome by prioritising which one is more important to complete at that time and making a schedule so that they can manage their time properly. So that it can minimise fatigue and the feeling of wanting to give up in completing the final project which is their obligation as final year students. Subjects also consider that the failures they have experienced do not make them just give up. And find a way to get up and succeed in completing their assignments.

Self-Efficacy is a person's belief in his or her capacity and ability to apply his or her power to his or her environment (Haesbol, 2019). Self-Efficacy itself is how an individual can assess a task, where he believes in his capacity to have choices to get something based on his capacity (Anderson & Haney, 2021). Finally, according to Baron and Bryne, Self Efficacy is an assessment that a person makes on their capacity to do and conquer obstacles (Emrizal & Primadona, 2023). Self-efficacy affects the way individuals behave despite having the same abilities because it essentially affects the way individuals choose, form goals, overcome problems, and persevere in trying (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Individuals will basically act to achieve their goals when they believe they will achieve those goals, but the tendency to make less effort will arise when they do not believe they can achieve success (Baron & Bryne, 2004).

Individuals with high Self Efficacy will generally continue to face certain challenges/problems even though they know it is difficult to do. Individuals who have high Self Efficacy will usually create a deep interest in an activity, they will develop their efforts to avoid failure that may arise (Ebrahim Belil, et. al, 2018). With high Self Efficacy, individuals believe that the inability they have is due to a lack of hard work, knowledge, and self-ability (Wang, et. al, 2021). So that in completing tasks individuals with high Self Efficacy are individuals who perform very well. In this case, there are aspects that are known to exist in self- efficacy, namely how individuals can realise their actions based on the level of difficulty of the task (magnitude), how individuals believe in their abilities in each situation (generality), and how individuals persevere in various obstacles and obstacles (strength).

Bandura (1994) shows the effect of self-efficacy on how individuals behave which is presented in various processes, namely cognitive, motivation, affection,

and selection. In its process in a cognitive way is useful in its role on how individuals translate environmental conditions and can sort out plans or solutions that are in accordance with the challenges of the environment so that self-efficacy will affect their actions. In the next role, the motivational process is useful in forming confidence in the individual towards the completion that he can do. While in the affection process, individuals will be able to overcome the many pressures during problem solving, the individual concerned will be able to solve it calmly and not anxious and controlled. Finally, the selection process will take part in the abilities and beliefs that are utilised in solving existing problems.

Through the results of the interviews, it was found that all aspects of how individuals achieve self-efficacy have been described by the four subjects. The experience of working while doing the final project is a challenge for students which makes them become hard workers and feel more confident in their abilities. The four subjects showed the characteristics described by the researcher so that it shows that even in severe challenges the subject has good self-efficacy. The subjects' efforts to increase efficacy in themselves are the support and motivation from family and closest people, how the atmosphere of work and education that supports the subject to remain confident in the choice to work while doing the final project supports all existing burdens. The campus administration and the cooperation of the supervisor were able to make the subject more confident that he was able to complete his final project well.

The results of the study are then in line with research conducted by relevant research conducted by Tsabitah & Hasan (2022), where good self- efficacy plays an important role in helping students complete their final project. Then research by Saraswati et al (2021), where the anxiety faced by students in facing challenges in completing the final project turned out to indicate low self- efficacy in students. Finally, from Fitri et al (2023) where with high self-efficacy students can develop their potential in balancing their lives as workers and students. Although the topics chosen are almost the same, this research certainly has its own characteristics. In addition to differences in research subjects and locations, previous studies only examined one condition of students such as students who work part-time or students who compile theses. Here the researcher sees that these two things are difficulties that are a current phenomenon, so the researcher wants to know how a student who is experiencing these conditions views self-efficacy in himself. This study shows that students who work part-time have varying levels of self-efficacy, depending on time management, social support, and previous work experience. These findings provide an update that working while preparing a thesis is not always an obstacle, in fact in some cases it can strengthen students' self-efficacy in facing academic challenges. Therefore, self-efficacy can be enhanced through constructive work experiences, not just from academic factors alone.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, students who work while completing their final project face various challenges that can affect the balance of academic and

work activities. In this context, self-efficacy plays an important role as a psychological factor that helps students manage time, maintain motivation, and believe in their ability to complete academic responsibilities. This research contributes to strengthening the understanding that self-efficacy not only supports academic success, but also becomes an important asset in dealing with the dual pressures of being a student and a worker. The practical benefits of this study are as a basis for lecturers, campus counselors, and educational institutions to design self-efficacy strengthening programs for working students. However, the limited number of participants due to time constraints is a note for future research. Future research is expected to explore broader contexts and cases so that the results are more comprehensive and provide more significant updates.

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