

# Adversity Quotient of the English Department Students and Constraints in Completing Their Thesis

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**Abstract**—This research aims to know how the Adversity Quotient and the constraints faced by students in writing scientific paper in the form of thesis. The writing of thesis as a final task requires greater concentration, focus, effort, time, and perseverance of students to complete. In the process of thesis consultation, the students have to struggle to manage their times for reading, writing, looking for references as well as working as employees. With various considerations, the respondents of this study were limited to 44 students in English Department. Data collection techniques used were online questionnaires and snowball techniques. Then, the collected data is analyzed in a qualitative descriptive using Adversity Response Profile (ARP). Based on ARP, the study revealed that the Adversity Quotient of students who are undergoing the thesis consultation and also as employees are in the camper category with an average value of 135.41. Meanwhile, the constraints faced by the students in writing thesis that came from the students themselves (internal factors), namely: (1) difficult to cope with laziness (36.8%), (2) difficult to pour ideas and concepts (31.6%), (3) difficult to target research results (31.6%), (4) less time to read and write (31.6%), and (5) difficult to understand the research methods (31.6%). The conclusion of this research is that the Adversity Quotient of students need to be improved since the beginning of the lecturing so that the acceleration of graduating students is not delayed.

**Keywords**—adversity quotient, thesis, constraints

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a long process that starts from family and formal education, namely education at an early age, elementary, junior and senior high schools and college. One of the objectives of education is to equip or prepare students to have some skills and competencies. Business leaders, politicians and educators have developed twenty-first century skill models and lists around the world in order to prepare students' skills and competencies based on technological developments [1,2] and industrial revolution 4.0.

In Indonesia, there are about 3.7 million graduates of high education every year. About 1.9 million went on to college. Due to intense competition and economic factors to be able to attend college, some graduates prefer to choose going straight

to work. As many as 1.8 million graduates compete with 1.3 million college graduates [3]. This condition has also occurred in America where students study after getting a job [4].

The lack of skills and knowledge the high school graduates have in working making them face many obstacles. They mostly work in the informal sector. Then, they continue their education at a higher level because of the demands of life and work. Their passion for continuing their education to a higher level can be appreciated because they have a high intrinsic motivation.

Higher education is the final step in implementing knowledge. Optimizing higher education graduates needs to improve the quality of teaching and learning. How students acquire skills and competencies and what they learn in college. The OECD has conducted a Feasibility study for the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes, which aimed to find out whether it was possible to compare the knowledge and skills of higher education students from different countries [5,6].

Students' problems in the University environment vary widely. For developed countries such as the UK and Japan, being able to study at universities is very selective. This means that academic ability is not a problem. However, students are faced with other psychical problems such as increasing mental health problems [7], stress levels [8], financial problems [9] self-esteem, family economic status, resilience, and school years [10], low GPA scores for students who are stressed [11].

Meanwhile, the main problem in Indonesian universities is more on academic issues. The incoming and outgoing students are not proportional meaning that the number of students completing studies is much less than the number of incoming students [12], and writing a thesis is one of the obstacles to accelerating students completing on time [13].

In order to obtain a bachelor's degree in the Indonesian higher education system requires students to write the final assignment in the form of scientific papers (thesis). Related to the writing of thesis, some research results reveal that the thesis writing process is indicated as one of the inhibitions of students finishing on time. The process of drafting the thesis includes the stages: (1) submitting the thesis title, (2) the preparation

and submission of the thesis proposal, (3) the implementation and processing of research results, (4) pouring ideas, concepts and refinement of research results, (5) reference searches, (6) trials, and (7) revision/improvement of the thesis after trial. Writing thesis requires the focus, seriousness, and perseverance of students to think as well as contemplation. In addition, the students also need to discuss with their thesis supervisors regularly and intensively to have knowledge related to the research and writing scientific work. The working students have to split their concentration (studying and working) and their stress levels can also increase.

The stress level of students will affect cognitive impairment and can have a negative impact, including prolonging study time and other mental disorders. The students' psychical conditions vary when they face difficulties or challenges. Some are able to face adversity and try to overcome it; but some are evading and running away from trouble. The strength of students in struggling to overcome their problems is greatly influenced by the intelligence possessed by students. Intelligence in dealing with difficult situations like that is called Adversity Quotient (AQ).

AQ, introduced by Paul G. Stoltz, is a person's success in addressing problems and difficulties or the gap between hope and reality. Consequently, she or he has a chance of achieving more maximum or better. Some individuals are incapable of aligning between hope and reality. This is where AQ plays, in addition to IQ and EQ. The scope of AQ includes three main disciplines: Cognitive Psychology, Psychoneuro-immunology, and Neurophysiology. AQ's research is very broad for the 3 sciences. Performance achievement, motivation, empowerment, creativity, productivity, learning, energy, hope, happiness, vitality, emotional health, physical health, persistence, resilience, attitude, longevity and response to change [14].

AQ research in education and the world of work, especially challenging and categorized topics, has been widely done. AQ has a positive influence on the development of mathematical creative reasoning capabilities in climber types [15]. Students with high AQ are able to face the learning of mathematics in various contents and with different models of learning [16].

There are no significant differences in gender in academic achievement. Gupta states that AQ is not influenced by gender, type of education or even by qualifications and parental status. However, significant differences in students' average AQ scores were found in the school quality [17,18]. Research in the world of work includes the challenges of teachers teaching in schools with special needs (inclusion). Adversity Quotient was introduced to prospective teachers since in the college to make them more resilient and competent to interact with their students [19]. For employee development, the company can adopt and implement the concept of AQ so that employees can make decisions, and explore their capabilities in the field of technology in improving the achievement of performance targets [20].

Another research in education reveals that the students who excel in academic performance of English language skills are those classified to be high and more mature Adversity Quotients [21]. There was a significant difference in average student study scores based on group-level AQ quitters, campers, and climbers. Students categorized as climbers get higher learning achievement than campers and quitters [22].

There are five main reasons why an individual needs to improve his or her ability to deal with AQ (1) is a valid and reliable benchmark for performance or other important variables, (2) is not permanent, can be changed and strengthened continuously, (3) is not an addition to current learning, performance, assessment, and change initiatives but is a natural enhancer, (4) not a program, but rather an adaptable technology, (5) has been studied for 37 years and 10 years of organizational/institutional and industrial implementation [23].

Observing some research results that AQ can be developed both at the level of education and the world of work. In contrast to IQ, which has been suspected so far is genetic intelligence whose development is limited to the age of 0-22 years. In this connection, universities are expected to facilitate the increase in AQ of their students both to accelerate completion of lectures and to prepare to be more resilient to achieve success in the world of work and society when implementing the knowledge they have. This is very interesting and a priority to be studied.

Besides, in Indonesia, universities have not been maximally synchronized between the needs of the business/ work world and the competence of graduates. So that there are still many college graduates who work not according to their competence. According to the Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim, the most important thing after students graduated from college is that they are free to earn a living, launch their dreams, and realize their passion or talents to be ready to become productive and character people in the Indonesian economy [24].

Therefore, the college is expected to facilitate the improvement and development of its student AQ and to produce competent graduates, not easily give up in facing difficult situations. In addition to accelerating the completion of students' studies so that graduates are more resilient to achieve success in the world of work in implementing their knowledge after completing their studies. This is very interesting and maybe a priority for further researches. The problem is how the AQ level of the working students in finishing their thesis. The objective of this study is to explore (1) the AQ levels of students writing the thesis while working, and (2) the constraints faced by the students in writing a thesis.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Human Quotients

Intelligence is the cognitive or intellectual ability to seek knowledge and use it well in solving structured problems with clear goals [25]. Another understanding of intelligence is the

rational thinking ability, effective learning, understanding complex ideas, and adapting to the environment [26]. Thus it can be concluded that intelligence is the ability to empower the cognitive to solve problems and understand complex ideas with rational, systematic and effective thinking influenced by genetics and the environment.

Intelligence is synonymous with the brain or center of human intelligence. The central process of human intelligence begins when the embryo is 3 weeks old that is influenced by parenting/genetic and the environment [27]. Parents are expected to provide maximum stimulants as the development of this intelligence center will continue until the adult child is 22 years old. After that, his or her cognitive development will decrease [28].

Human intelligence can be divided into: (1) Intelligence Quotient (IQ), (2) Emotion Quotient (EQ), (3) Spiritual Quotient (SQ), and (4) Adversity Quotient, in addition to Gardner multiple intelligence. IQ is defined as cognitive ability, intellectual, rational thinking and talent. At the center of intelligence, one of the lobes is frontal lobe. The functions of this lobe include problem solving, high-level thinking processes, focus or concentration, regulating emotions, personality formation (memory and emotional expression), and self-control, which are carried out in 2 stages. The first stage of a child is 3-12 years old, where they think reality/fact. The second stage of prefrontal cortex-judgment, aged 12-22 in the illustration: Macmilan Cancer Support 2012: *Brain Development-How Can You Help Your Children Learn And Grow Up* [29].

EQ is one's ability to recognize and regulate or control the emotions of one's own and others [30]. It can be some people have higher levels of emotional intelligence than others [31]. EQ is like social intelligence and interpersonal intelligence (the ability to understand others such as motivation, behavior, work style and temporary attitudes) and intrapersonal (the ability to set norms for yourself and use them in life).

EQ can be developed for adults such as employees by conducting training in the world of work. Teaching strategies of EQ through character education, modeling, positive behavior, encouraging people to think about how others feel, and finding ways to be more empathized towards others [32]. The development of EQ at the center of intelligence is at the temporal lobe, precisely in the limbic system that functions among others, regulating long-term memory, emotions, and motivation in illustration: Macmilan Cancer Support 2012: *Brain Development-How can you help your children learn and grow up* [29].

Humans as psychological, social, and spiritual beings need a more peaceful, balanced and important life for mental health. Many people feel the need for meaningful life by uniting spirituality, inner and outer life to achieve true happiness. It started with an analysis suggesting that computers could have high IQs. Animals can have high EQ. Both have no anxiety, think about itself, and about life in general. Even how to engineer or change the situation that exists in it [33]. SQ's

tendency to need religious values. Existential intelligence on Gardner's multiple intelligence is one form of SQ.

Digesting the frontal and temporal functions of the lobe, it can be concluded that a person's intelligence has been established since he was born. The development of individual intelligence based on the characteristics of intelligence itself and the theories of scientists are based on the results of research.

AQ as an indicator of how a person can survive adversity, and the ability to overcome such difficulties or the capacity of an individual to face difficulties in his or her life. Human AQ is grouped into three categories: (1) quitter (low), (2) camper (medium), and (3) climber (high) [14]. In a more detail, it is presented in the following Table 1.

TABLE I. CATEGORIZATION OF AQ

Number	Category AQ	Score
1.	Quitter (low)	≤ 59
	Quitter transition to Camper	60 - 94
2.	Camper (middle)	95-134
	Camper transition to Climber	135-165
3.	Climber (high )	≥166-200

Quitters are grouped to be individuals having low AQ. They lack fighting, motivation, ambition, and passion. They tend to be easily surrendered, desperate, pessimistic and lacking in quality. They don't like challenges and dare not to try because they imagine something that's hard to achieve.

Campers are grouped to be individuals having moderate AQ. They are motivated, dare to try, love challenges but are thoughtful and not yet maximal. In the middle of the climbing process or struggle when they find a difficulty, they easily decide to stop struggling to the top of the climb but instead enjoy the good times of resting like campers.

Climbers are categorized to individuals having high AQs. They are hopeful, highly motivated, creative, and resilient. For them, there is no word on giving up to achieve their goals. Climbers have a great chance to be successful because they are confident, positive-minded, and optimistic so that they keep on struggling and making inroads to get to the top of the climb.

#### B. Adversity Quotient Dimensions

There are four dimensions of AQ called CO2RE (Control, Origin, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance) that form the basis in determining individual AQ levels [20] and [14], namely:

- Control is the ability to control, manage, and overcome all difficulties occur.
- Origin and ownership is the ability to take responsibility for fixing and playing a role in addressing the problems faced.
- Reach is the ability to adapt in facing problems and affect in other activities carried out.

- Endurance is the speed and accuracy in solving problems.

### C. Adversity Quotient Forming Factor

In real people there are factors that shape adversity quotient [22], namely: (1) competitiveness, (2) productivity, (3) motivation, (4) risk taking, (5) improvement, (6) perseverance, and (7) learning. Developing these components will result in resilient and competent individuals. Then, Stolz adds a highly effective way of growing AQ to help someone make permanent improvements in responding to difficulties through listening, digging/exploring, analyzing and doing things (LEAD). The point is that if a person faces difficulties, then he or she should not stop and avoid the problem. Try listen to the response to adversity. Find the root of the problem and explore alternatives for resolution. Analyze the difficulties faced and determine implementing LEAD for a solution.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted at Pamulang University (UNPAM), South Tangerang. The reason for choosing this campus as a research site is because it has a big number of active students, namely 68,167 students [34]. Most students are workers. This step is a pioneering one which is expected to be followed up in other fields of study in UNPAM so that the acceleration of graduating students can be optimized.

The research population is the Regular English Department C students who are in the process of writing thesis. This research uses a qualitative approach with survey methods. Sampling techniques are conducted online through google form with snowball technique. The number of students who succeeded as respondents were 44 students. Data collection is carried out for 10 days, starting from July 24th to August 3rd, 2020.

The variables of this study are the level of adversity quotient and the constraints of students in writing thesis. The collected data is then analyzed descriptively qualitatively using the Adversity Response Profile (ARP) measuring tool developed by Paul G. Stoltz. This measuring instrument has been widely used and tested in various similar studies. The level of validity has been tested.

### IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research highlights the AQ level of 44 students writing thesis while working and the obstacles they faced. After having completed course studies, they may write and submit a research proposal at the beginning of semester 8th, and get guidance from the appointed lecturers. Ideally, along with the learning process, students may have already thought about the form of the final task to work on. Informal guidance can be done at any time. However, the frequent case found is that the students are smitten when entering the campus world, which is synonymous with intellectuals and feel something new for some. The

following Table 2 shows the number of guided students by semester.

TABLE II. NUMBER OF GUIDED STUDENTS BY SEMESTER

Semester	Students	%
8	20	45.5
9	3	6.8
10	9	20.4
11	5	11.4
12	4	9.1
14	3	6.8

Based on Table 2, the students actually have the chance to be timely graduated, they haven't only had high motivation but also hard work. As their earlier motivation to go to college while working, the same motivation should also be in finishing their studies. The process of writing thesis and the conduct of research is approximately 6 months. Facts in the field show that 54.5% of guided students are above 8<sup>th</sup> semester. There are even some students still in the process of completing their thesis in the semester of 14.

As explained by Stolz, individual AQ corrections are based on CO2RE dimensions. In line with this, the author tries to reveal a student's AQ per dimension first. From the process of analyzing data and achieving dimension values, it can be known the strengths and weaknesses of each respondent. In general, that weakness can be improved.

The following is an overview of students' AQ based on CO2RE dimensions. The higher the CO2RE dimension value, the better the student AQ. To see the students' achievement in each dimension, the authors tried to provide a category limit with the middle score of the lowest and highest grades. In the Table 3 Dimension C, it can be seen that the lowest value is 10 and the highest value is 25. The category delimiter value is at 17. Then 10-17 is categorized to be low and 18-25 is categorized to be high. The achievement of the Dimension C value is presented in Table 3.

TABLE III. ACHIEVEMENT DIMENSION C VALUE

Category	Value	Frequency	%
Highest	25	1	
Lowest	10	1	
Range	10-17	17	38.6
	18-25	27	61.4

Noticing the results of Dimension C in Table 3 notices a fairly obvious difference. Based on Table 3, our findings prove that about 61.4% of students have the ability to control, manage, and overcome the difficulties faced. The number of students having the ability to overcome difficulties increases.

The category delimiter value is at 17 so that the value up to 10-17 are categorized as low and 18-25 are categorized as high. A more detailed explanation can be found in Table 4 below.

**TABLE IV. ACHIEVEMENT DIMENSION O VALUE**

Category	Value	Frequency	%
Highest	25	1	
Lowest	10	2	
Range	10-17	18	40.9
	18-25	26	59.1

Based on the results of Dimension O in Table 4, our finding shows that about 40.9% of students are in the low category. This means that 59.1% of students have the ability to be responsible for improving and playing a role in addressing the problems faced. Dimension O results show that the number of responsible students addressing the problem is greater.

In Table 5, the category delimiter value is 14 so that the value of 5-14 is categorized to be low and 15-24 is categorized to be high.

**TABLE V. ACHIEVEMENT DIMENSION R VALUE**

Category	Value	Frequency	%
Highest	24	1	
Lowest	5	1	
Range	5-14	19	43.2
	15-24	25	56.8

Looking at the results of Dimension R in Table 5, our finding suggest that the achieved results are not very significant. About 43.2% of students were categorized as low. This means that 56.8% of students have the ability to adapt to problems faced and influence other activities. The results of Dimension R show that the number of students who are able to adapt in facing problems is greater.

In Table 6, the category limiting value is 15. The value of 6-15 is categorized to be low and 16-25 is categorized to be high.

**TABLE VI. ACHIEVEMENT DIMENSION E VALUE**

Category	Value	Frequency	%
Highest	25	1	
Lowest	6	1	
Range	6-15	18	40.9%
	16-25	26	59.1%

The results of Dimensions O and E are about the same even though the categories are low and differently high. Our finding prove that about 40.9% of students are categorized as low meaning that 59.1% of students are able to solve problems quickly and precisely. The results of Dimension E show that the number of students having speed and accuracy in addressing the problem increase to be greater.

Noticing the results of the CO2RE dimensions in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 can be concluded, except for dimension C, that there are no significant differences in student AQ. This means that despite the differences in low and high categories, AQ students show balanced results.

Furthermore, CO2RE results from 44 students were analyzed using ARP measuring instruments to obtain student AQ scores. Therefore, it is necessary to categorize data acquisition as seen in the following Table 7.

**TABLE VII. ARP SCORING RESULTS**

Score	Category	%
≤ 59	Quitter	-
60 - 94	Quitter transition to Camper	2.3
95-134	Camper	45.4
135-165	Camper transition to Climber	40.9
≥166-200	Climber	11.4

Taking into account table 7, our finding suggest that it can be seen that no students are in the Quitter category. Only 2.3% were categorized on Quitter's transition to Camper. Meanwhile, camper students are categorized as 45.4% and 40.9% transition camper to climber. At the highest level, Climber, there are 11.4% of students.

Thus the average earnings value of ARP is 135.41. The largest number of AQ students is in the Camper category. Camper types are individuals having eagerness to try challenges but will stop when facing difficult problems. Individual characteristics of the camper type has a pattern of thinking in solving problems with imitative reasoning [15]. This is one of the causes that make students delay in completing their final assignment. If this type is given support, coaching, and motivation since from the beginning, then they will have the opportunity to be in a higher level, namely Climber. Climber has high creativity in solving problems [15].

In the context of working students, the ideal learning is to apply andragogy approach (adult learning). In reality, the students still need the direction and guidance of the faculty because most students have heterogeneous jobs and backgrounds [35].

Furthermore, the results of research based on constraints, not very deeply described because from some research writing scientific work is relatively difficult. So the authors only make repetitions from previous researches.

From the 44 students only 38 answered appropriately. Students state that the main obstacles they faced in writing thesis come from internal factors. A more detailed explanation can be found in Table 8 below.

**TABLE VIII. CONSTRAINTS IN THESIS WRITING**

Types of Problems	%
Overcoming laziness	36.8
Pouring ideas and concepts	31.6
Report the results of the study	
Limited time to read and write	
Difficulty in understanding research methods	

Our finding prove that the problem faced by many students present in Table 8 (36.8% is to overcome the laziness. The same findings about laziness were also the research findings

conducted by Andani [13]. Fatigue all day at work makes students' thinking decreases and weakens making it difficult to concentrate and focus. This reason can be understood because writing a thesis requires not only sufficient concentration and time but also the ability to understand the rules of scientific writing and research.

Furthermore, pouring out ideas and concepts, reviewing the results of research, less time to read and write, and difficulty in understanding research methods are the next obstacles the students faced. The percentage result in Table 8, appears insignificant because the question asked is optional. This means that the students choose answers that are relevant to the level of difficulty they face. From the result of the selection is then presented in percentage.

#### V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Writing thesis is a process requiring focus, seriousness, and the ability to write scientific papers as well as proportional time management. In responding to writing thesis, the students have not been able (1) to overcome the laziness, (2) to narrate research results, (3) to express ideas and concepts, and besides the limited time of students - to read and write. Most of the students, either full time or part time, - have a tendency to ignore the lectures' process so that completion of writing thesis timely cannot be achieved. Ideally, working besides studying in colleges should be treated as a big challenge that can be harmonized. Success in overcoming these challenges is often linked to the level of AQ the students have.

The role of AQ is more dominant for the working students of particular in overcoming the obstacles in Realizing that the AQ of students is at the Camper level and the transition from Camper to Climber. This level has the potential to graduate on time if the students are directed, mentored and facilitated earlier by the teaching staff. The conclusion of this study is that the Adversity Quotient of students needs to be continuously developed so that the acceleration of student graduation is not delayed.

This research still needs to be followed-up because of some difficulties faced during the conduct of this research, including the impact of Covid19 pandemic, limited supporting data collected, difficulty to meet the students as well as to conduct online interviews.

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