

The Profile of Students' Academic Hardiness: A Descriptive Study

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Abstract—Academic hardiness is students' ability to face challenges, carry out commitment, and proper control in every academic activity. Academic hardiness is one of the abilities that students must possess amid globalization that is identical with competence and competition. Responding to this phenomenon, schools as guidance centers can provide guidance and counseling services that focus on developing student academic hardiness. The purpose of this study was to describe the profile of students' academic hardiness in general and the profile of academic resilience aspects at MAS Imam Syafii, Aceh Besar. This research employed a quantitative approach with descriptive methods. The population of this research was 70 students of MAS Imam Syafii. The results showed that the general academic hardiness profile was in the medium category, namely more than half (40 students) or about (57.1%) were in the medium category, with Mean = 45 and SD = 9. This research is expected to theoretically and practically contribute to the education sector, especially in guidance and counseling services in schools.

Keywords—academic hardiness, guidance, and counseling

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid flow of globalization cannot be denied and has an impact on the increase of students' academic demands. One of the impacts of globalization on students is the demand to compete in the world of work. Based on the meeting of The 10th Indonesia Human Resource Summit (IHRs) 2018, the Chairman of IHRs 2018, Shauqi Gombang Aleyandra admitted that there are several work sectors in the industry replaced by technological sophistication. Particularly, robots take the role of replacing humans resources by having automatic machines. Besides, school-age students in the world will work in a profession that has never existed today.

The biggest challenge faced by students in the current era of globalization is the ability to face academic demands. One of the strengths that students must have to face academic demands is academic hardiness. Academic hardiness is a personality characteristic that can differentiate students who avoid challenging academic tasks and other students who dare to pursue this type of challenge [1]. Based on the academic context in the era of globalization, to face competitiveness,

challenges, and pressures is fundamental and requires good attention by individuals, families, and communities [2].

The term hardiness was first put forward by Kobasa as one of the promoters of resilience theory. According to Kobasa [3], hardiness is one of the significant variables that is a major force in personality and physical health that can generate interest in achieving success in life. Hardier people are assumed to have a commitment or involvement in daily activities, have control of all daily activities, and recognize threats in their life. However, on the other hand, people who are not brave and lack commitment will show alienation, lack of control, and less interest in challenges. Over time, the term hardiness has developed in various spheres of life both in education or academics, economics, and other relevant fields. Academic hardiness is defined as student resilience in facing academic challenges, committing to participate in academic activities, and having maximum performance in obtaining academic achievement [4].

According to Benishek, et al., [2,5,6] there are three aspects of academic hardiness, namely commitment, control, and challenge. First, commitment is a tendency to get involved in whatever is being done and not give up easily. Second, control is a tendency to accept and believe that individuals can control and influence events and experiences when dealing with unexpected things. Individuals with higher control will be more optimistic and successful in solving problems. Third, challenges, namely the tendency to see changes in his life as very beneficial for his development and to view life as a happy challenge. This individual is dynamic and has the ability and desire to progress.

The characteristics of the academic hardiness development of each individual are different. The most influencing factor is the environment. Environmental differences also affect student achievement, such as one news source in online media which states that high school students in Aceh have started competing at the national level. Unfortunately, it only happens to students in favorite schools in districts/cities. However, the high school students in the suburban area had not yet reached that stage. This indicates that students do not have significant academic resilience to be able to compete in the global era. The ideal

academic profile of Hardiness students in facing the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is to be able to adapt to the academic pressures [6].

Based on the phenomenon that occurs in high school students in Aceh, this study provides a general description of academic hardiness and a description of the academic hardiness of MAS Imam Syafii students based on its aspects. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for teachers and parents to be able to provide appropriate interventions in an effort of preparing students to face the globalization challenges.

II. METHODS

This research employed a quantitative approach with descriptive methods. The research was conducted at MAS Imam Syafii, Aceh Besar. MAS Imam Syafii is an Islamic boarding school that has high academic demands compared to regular schools. Therefore, students in this school must be able to face the academic challenges given at their school. The population of this research was 154 students of MAS Imam Syafii. Meanwhile, the research sample was 70 students.

Data were collected using the modified Academic Hardiness Scale (AHS) from Benishek & Lopez [7]. According to Kobasa [7] AHS was developed by using three aspects of academic hardiness based on psychological hardiness theory, namely commitment, challenge, and control. The AHS consist of 18 self-report items on a 1-4 Likert scale, of which 1 is highly unsuitable and 4 is highly suitable. However, AHS will be modified into a scale in Indonesian and re-validated based on the expert's judgments and students' try out in schools. A total of 18 items on the AHS scale were outlined on 30 students. The results of the validity test indicate that items number 5 and 13 need to be revised to be reused with the correlation coefficient close to 0.3 and the reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) was 0.808. It means that the scale is valid and reliable. Therefore, it can be used on research subjects.

The data for categorization of academic hardiness used hypothetical norms with means and standard deviations. The norm of research subject categorization is described as follows [8]:

TABLE I. THE RESEARCH SUBJECT CATEGORIZATION

Categorization Norm Formula	Category
$(\text{Mean} + 1,0 \text{ SD}) < X$	High
$(\text{Mean} - 1,0 \text{ SD}) < X < (\text{Mean} + 1,0 \text{ SD})$	Medium
$X < (\text{Mean} - 1,0 \text{ SD})$	Low

After the data was categorized then used benchmarks to describe the category results. The benchmarks used in this study are as follows [9]:

TABLE II. BENCHMARK CATEGORIES BASED ON THE PERCENTAGE

Percentage Value Range	Benchmark Category
100 %	All
80-90 %	General
60-79 %	Majority
50-59%	More than half
40-49%	Less than half
20-39%	Fraction
0-19%	So little

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

1) The Profile of Student Academic Hardiness in General:

The results showed that the level of student academic hardiness was in the medium category. This can be seen that more than half (40 students) of the frequency or about (57.1%) was in the medium category, less than half was in the high category (40%) then the rest was in a low category (2.9%), with mean = 45 and SD = 9. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of academic hardiness at MAS Imam Syafii is in the medium category. In more detail, the general academic hardiness profile is presented in Table 4 and Figure 1.

TABLE III. THE PROFILE OF STUDENT ACADEMIC HARDINESS

No	Category	f	%	Meaning
1	Low ($X \leq 36$)	2	2.9 %	So little
2	Medium ($36 < X \leq 54$)	40	57.1%	More than half
3	High ($X > 58.5$)	28	40.0%	Less than half
Total		70	100%	

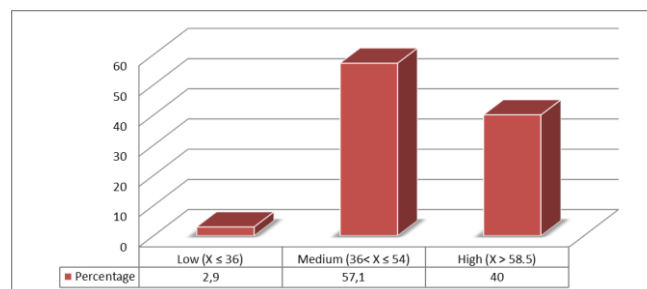


Fig. 1. The profile of student academic hardiness.

2) The Profile of Student Academic Hardiness based on its Aspects: After a description of academic hardiness in general, the following description is about the academic hardiness profile at MAS Imam Syafii, Aceh Besar. The academic hardiness was based on three aspects, namely commitment, challenge, and control. The aspect with the highest percentage and score was the commitment aspect which was in the high category (57%). In the second position, there was a control aspect (52.9%). While the last aspect was the challenge aspect (50%). In more detail, the academic hardiness profile based on its aspects is presented in table 4.

TABLE IV. THE PROFILE OF STUDENT ACADEMIC HARDINESS BASED ON ITS ASPECTS

No	Aspect	Category	Frequency	Persentase
1.	Commitment	Low ($X \leq 12$)	1	1,4%
		Medium ($12 < X \leq 18$)	29	41,4%
		High ($X > 18$)	40	57,1%
2.	Challenge	Low ($X \leq 12$)	9	12,9%
		Medium ($12 < X \leq 18$)	26	37,1 %
		High ($X > 18$)	35	50%
3.	Control	Low ($X \leq 12$)	1	1,4 %
		Medium ($12 < X \leq 18$)	32	45,7%
		High ($X > 18$)	37	52,9%

3) *The Profile of Student Academic Hardiness based on the Commitment Aspect:* The results showed that the level of student academic hardiness based on the commitment aspect was in the high category. This can be seen from more than half (40 students) of the frequency or about (57.1%) was in the high category, less than half of the frequency was in the medium category (41.4%), and the rest was in a low category (1.4%) with the Mean = 18 and SD = 2,8. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of academic hardiness on the commitment aspect at MAS Imam Syafii was in the high category. In more detail, the profile of student academic hardiness based on the commitment aspect can be seen in Figure 2.

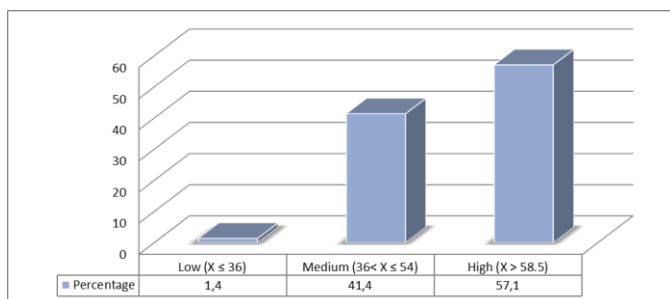


Fig. 2. The profile of student academic hardiness based on commitment aspect.

4) *The Profile of Student Academic Hardiness based on the Challenge Aspect:* The results showed that the level of student academic hardiness based on the challenge aspect was in the high category. This can be seen that more than half (35 students) of the frequency or about (50%) was in the high category. A small part was in the medium category (37.1%). Meanwhile, the low category obtained 12.9% with mean = 15 and SD = 3. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of academic hardiness in the challenge aspect at MAS Imam Syafii was in the high category. In more detail, the profile of academic hardiness based on the challenge aspect can be seen in Figure 3.

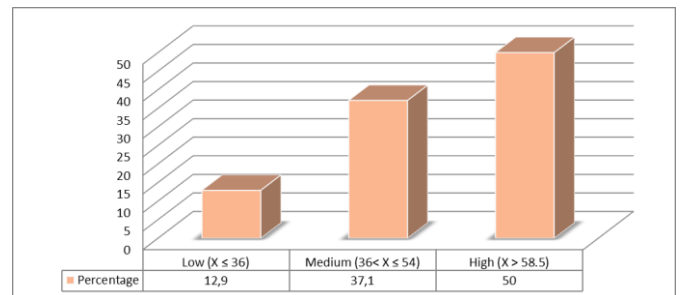


Fig. 3. The profile of student academic hardiness based on challenge aspect.

5) *The Profile of Student Academic Hardiness based on the Control Aspect:* The results showed that the level of student academic hardiness based on the control aspect was in the high category. This can be seen that more than half (37 students) of the frequency or approximately (52.9%) was in the high category. Less than half of the frequency was in the medium category (45.7%). The rest of the frequency was in a low category (1.4%) with mean = 18 and SD = 2,6. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of academic hardiness based on the control aspect at MAS Imam Syafii was in the high category. In more detail, the profile of student academic hardiness based on the control aspect can be seen in Figure 4.

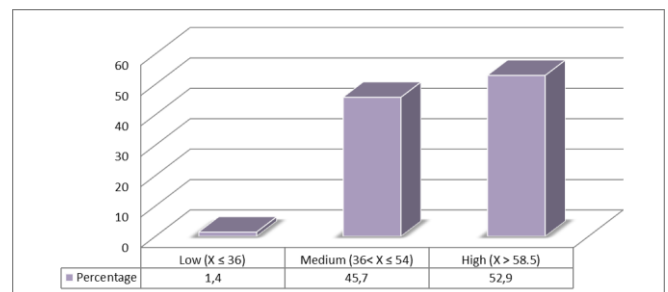


Fig. 4. The profile of student academic hardiness based on the control aspect.

B. Discussion

The results of the study describe that the profile of student academic hardiness at MAS Imam Syafii, Aceh Besar, in general, is in the medium category. This means that some students can be tough in facing academic challenges/ assignments. Unfortunately, some students still lack academic resilience and need to be developed. The aspect that has the highest percentage and score is the commitment aspect, which is in the high category, in the second position there is the control aspect, and the last is the challenge aspect. The characteristics of MAS Imam Syafii students, when viewed from the highest aspect of academic hardiness, namely the commitment aspect, has the characteristics of being able to complete difficult tasks. This ability is influenced by their presence in the boarding school environment where they are trained to be disciplined and obey school rules. Therefore, the assumption of difficult assignments in academics as an obligation can be completed easily. Another characteristic of

commitment is also reflected in the enthusiasm to fight back when they start to give up. This is also due to the role of peers and teachers at MAS Imam Syafii who are very familiar, religious, and also care for one another.

Achievement of Academic hardiness is strongly influenced by the combination of the three aspects possessed by students. The existence of academic hardiness will make it easier for students to withstand academic pressure, be able to control stress, and depression [10], and better maintain their mental health [11]. Furthermore, research [2] suggests that academic hardiness will also have an impact on student achievement and self-efficacy. According to Kobasa [12], the differences in high, medium, and low aspects of academic hardiness are also influenced by the ability of individuals to avoid behavior that is contrary to these three aspects. First, commitment (vs. alienation) symbolizes committed individuals who will be very actively involved in daily activities whether under pressure or not. Second, control (vs. powerlessness) reflects the desire to continue to influence the results that occur without thinking about the difficulties. Third, challenge (vs. security) describes the hope that individual lives will change. Meanwhile, the change will lead to better personal development.

Furthermore, Maddi [12] also explained that the aspect of control in academic hardiness is characterized by students being able to manage their studies; for example by demonstrating good time management, prioritizing activities that contribute most to academic success, and taking responsibility for learning and personal development. Attitudes that reflect aspects of the challenge are more directed at academic performance including the ability to recognize opportunities and assess situations that cause stress. The differences in the characteristics of academic hardiness among students are also influenced by several factors including:

1) *Age*: The existence of academic hardiness in individuals tends to be in the stage of adolescent development towards adulthood. This is illustrated by the research subjects from adolescence to adulthood who are prone to stress and depression on academic demands compared to children, such as research on academic hardiness conducted by Sheard [12].

2) *Parents and teachers parenting*: This also cannot be separated from the support of parents and teachers. One of the supports that can develop student academic hardiness is parenting. The results showed that parenting has a significant role in student resilience and is considered capable of maintaining students' mental health [13].

3) *Life satisfaction and social comparison*: This means that good life satisfaction and appropriate social comparisons in the environment are directly proportional to the level of academic hardiness [14].

There have been many attempts to improve academic hardiness in the areas of guidance and counseling, psychology, and education. This is illustrated through research and previous studies regarding the approaches or strategies to develop academic hardiness. An experimental study conducted by

Mohamadi [15] who created an academic hardiness training model for active students was carried out for six weeks by grouping students into the experimental group and the control group. The findings of the study show that academic hardiness training is effective at reducing stress levels and simultaneously increasing hardiness against academic pressure at universities.

Guidance group with group exercises techniques is declared effective for developing academic hardiness in high school students [16]. Group exercise techniques have advantages [17], namely: (a) group exercises can create intimacy and increase comfort levels of group members to share experiences and solve problems; (b) group exercises can provide useful information for group members and leaders; (c) group exercises can focus the members on a particular issue and topic; (d) group exercises provide opportunities for group members for experiential-based learning; and (e) group exercises can create fun and relaxation for group members. The reason for applying the group exercise technique in the guidance group is to develop students' academic hardiness since the characteristics of the group exercise technique are in the form of an integrative training technique, experimental learning, and learning that evokes students' comfort and self-welfare. Intervention regarding the effectiveness of reality counseling group to improve student academic hardiness used a pretest-posttest control group design. The results were obtained by the experimental group getting a higher academic hardiness score than the control group. It can be concluded that reality counseling group improves academic hardiness effectively [18].

IV. CONCLUSION

The results showed that the profile of student academic hardiness at MAS Imam Syafii, Aceh Besar was generally in the medium category, namely more than half (40 students) of the frequency or approximately (57.1%) was in the moderate category, with mean = 45 and SD = 9. Academic hardiness is viewed in three aspects, namely commitment, challenge, and control. The aspect with the highest percentage and score was the commitment aspect that was in the high category (57%), then in the second position was the control aspect (52.9%), and finally, the challenge aspect (50%). This means that some students can be tough in facing academic challenges/ assignments and some students still lack academic resilience and need to be developed.

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