STUDENTS’ SELF-EFFICACY IN CONFRONTING CHANGES OF THE FORM ON THE FINAL PROJECT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Eka Cahya Maulidiyah
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
ekamaulidiyah@unesa.ac.id

Khabibur Rohman
Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
haabib.rohman@gmail.com

Abstract
Among changes that occur in education, especially in universities, COVID-19 pandemic affects on the change of form on final project as a requirement for student graduation. Some universities no longer require students to write thick and complex thesis as a graduation requirement, but they switch to write articles published in scientific journals. By then, the present study aims to see how is the self-efficacy of final year students in responding to the policy. This study implements quantitative descriptive research design. The researchers measure the student self-efficacy using a scale adapted from academic self-efficacy consisting of 23 items. The results showed that final year students were not familiar enough with reading and writing scientific articles. As many as 50.98% of respondents admitted that they rarely read scientific articles. There were even 29.41% of respondents who had never written scientific papers before. Interestingly, the average score of students’ self-efficacy in writing scientific papers is quite high, which is 65.5. The results of this study can be used as a basis for lecturers and policy makers at universities, in order to familiarize students with reading and writing scientific articles.

Keywords: Article, Self-Efficacy, Thesis
Abstrak


Kata Kunci: Artikel, Efikasi Diri, Skripsi

INTRODUCTION

The presence of Covid-19 virus has an impact on almost all sectors, both from health, economy, tourism, industry and education is no exception. In order to reduce the rate or even break the chain of the spread of the COVID-19 virus, health authorities urge the public to implement the 5 policy, namely maintaining distance, wearing masks, washing hands regularly, reducing mobility and avoiding crowds. Several agencies, companies, and educational institutions are no exception taking the WFH (Work from Home) option.¹

As a meeting place for many people, schools are certainly places that are vulnerable to transmission of the virus. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture decided that all learning activities from all levels of education, from preschool to university, be carried out remotely. This is of course done on the basis of considerations of public health and safety in order to suppress the growth of the virus which is spreading very quickly.  

Changes in learning activities from face-to-face to distance learning have brought many changes. Among the changes in education in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is the change in the form of student final assignments. Some campuses issue a policy that the graduation requirements for students are no longer required to write a thesis, but may be replaced by writing articles which will be published in scientific journals. One of these policies is based on the argument that writing a thick and complex thesis during a pandemic like the current one is too heavy and difficult to do. Although theses and articles both belong to the clump of scientific writing, articles are more concise and specific.

As a new policy, changing the final project from a thesis to a scientific article has the potential to cause several obstacles. Not only for students, but also for supervisors and examiners. This policy was released when lectures took place online, so socialization could only be done through the campus website. In addition, another impact is the guidance process in the process of writing the article itself. It is widely known that the online mentoring model allows for many obstacles when compared to the face-to-face mentoring model.

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At first glance, making scientific articles seems easier than writing a thesis. The information presented in the thesis is more complete and complex, while scientific articles are presented in a more concise and compact format. The length of scientific articles is in the range of 3500 to 6000 words. While in the thesis the amount can be up to many times that amount. Even so, making scientific articles is not without problems. As a new policy, there is quite a lot of information that is not yet understood by students and even the supervisors themselves. Not to mention if the graduation requirements set by the college are not just making scientific articles, but also submitting and even publishing these articles in journals.  

Students are the ones who most feel the change in the format of graduation requirements from theses to articles published in this scientific journal. How students respond to this policy is interesting to study. Do the students have enough confidence to be able to complete the writing and publication of scientific articles as a graduation requirement or not. In the study of Psychology, a person’s belief in his ability to succeed at something is called self-efficacy. Thus, this study measures students’ self-efficacy and their attitudes in compiling scientific articles as a graduation requirement. Of course, there have been many studies related to student self-efficacy, both specifically related to final project writing, as well as student self-
efficacy in lectures. However, no research has been found that specifically examines student efficacy related to the preparation of articles as a final project. This is partly because this policy is relatively new. For this reason, this research is important.

**METHOD**

This research uses quantitative descriptive design. Researchers describe the data collected and analyzed quantitatively. Researchers measure students’ self-efficacy in writing scientific articles as a graduation requirement. The self-efficacy scale used to collect student self-efficacy data in writing scientific articles refers to Bandura’s theory which consists of aspects of Magnitude, Generality, and Strength. The efficacy scale consists of 23 favorite question items. Answer responses in this scale consist of four ranges of answers based on the Likert scale, namely Very Sure (VS), Sure (S), Uncertain (U), Very Uncertain (VU). The scoring moves from 1 to 4. For the Very Sure (VS) option, a score of 4 is given. A score of 3 for the Sure answer (S), a score of 2 for the Uncertain (U), and a score of 1 for the Very Uncertain (VU). Furthermore, the researchers examined these findings qualitatively in order to obtain a more in-depth explanation using interview techniques. This study involved 51 final year student respondents from 4 universities by details, 42 are female and 9 respondents are male.

Researchers categorize students’ self-efficacy scores in writing articles into 5 categories, namely very high, high, medium, low and very low. This categorization is carried out to place the respondents in

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separate and tiered groups on a continuum based on their responses. With the following categorization:

- **Very low**: $X < 2$
- **Low**: $2 \leq X \leq 4$
- **Medium**: $4 < X \leq 6$
- **High**: $6 < X \leq 8,4$
- **Very high**: $X > 8,4$

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Self-efficacy is formed from many factors. Both internal and external factors. Among the factors that are considered to have a considerable influence on a person's self-efficacy are past experiences. A person's success in overcoming a problem in the past will foster confidence in that person to be able to overcome similar problems in the future. Vice versa, the experience of failure will make a person pessimistic to face similar challenges in the future. For this reason, the best way to learn a new skill or improve in a particular area is to practice diligently.

Regarding the ability to write scientific articles, of course this is greatly influenced by the intensity of reading and writing scientific articles themselves. Someone who has a high intensity of reading scientific articles will be more skilled in writing scientific articles. Likewise with the intensity of someone in writing scientific articles. Writing is an ability that is acquired through practice. The more intensively a person practices writing, the more proficient that person will be in writing articles.

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Based on the data above, none of the respondents have never read scientific articles. All of the responses had read scientific articles, even though the intensity was relatively low. The majority of respondents admitted that they rarely read scientific articles, as many as 26 respondents (50.98%), 22 respondents (43.14%) often and only 3 respondents (5.88%) who claimed to read scientific articles very often. In general, it can be concluded that the final year students who were respondents in this study were not familiar enough with the activity of reading scientific articles.

It is common knowledge that the reading interest of the Indonesian people is very low. Based on UNESCO data, out of 1000 Indonesian people there is only 1 person who really has a good interest in reading. Unfortunately, this low interest in reading also occurs among students.\textsuperscript{10} This is corroborated by the data above. Students are not familiar enough with the activity of reading scientific articles. The facts above show that most students come to class unprepared and have sufficient information related to the lecture theme. Students still use lecturers as their main learning resource. This is of course a concern, when access to open quality reading sources is very wide, easy and cheap, students do not use them well.\textsuperscript{11}


\textsuperscript{11} Muhammad Abdul Ghofur and Wahjoedi Wahjoedi, “Preferensi Sumber Belajar Online Mahasiswa Pendidikan Ekonomi,” \textit{Jurnal Ekonomi Pendidikan Dan Kewirausahaan} 6, no. 1 (2018): 105–14; Erik Fahron Setiadi, Alia Azmi, and Junaidi
Based on the data above, it is found that there are quite a number of final year students who have never written a scientific article, namely 15 respondents (29.41%). The majority of respondents admitted that they rarely write scientific articles, as many as 29 students (56.86%). The rest there are 6 respondents (11.76%) who often and only 1 respondent (1.96%) who admits to very often write scientific articles.

Several studies have stated that students are not only less familiar with the activity of writing scientific articles, but also writing activities in general. In fact, the ability to write is one of the most important language skills for an academician to have. With this ability, academics can express and convey ideas to the public. Having good writing skills will not only help students to graduate on time, but will also boost their potential. The development of various social media platforms also has an impact on students’ interest in reading and writing. Through their gadgets, students can easily access reading resources. But students read more popular articles than scientific articles, likewise with writing activities. The students wrote more chat or short comments than writing full and systematic ideas.

The data on the intensity of reading and writing articles for students above are not surprising at all. There have been quite a number of studies that have succeeded in exposing that students’ interest in reading and writing is generally low. Especially for reading and writing scientific articles that are presented in a strict and rigid manner.


12 Nafri Yanti, Suhartono Suhartono, and Fina Hiasa, “Keterampilan Menulis Akademik Mahasiswa S-1 Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia...
One of the factors that are considered to affect the low intensity of reading and writing scientific articles among students is that lectures designed by lecturers do not bring students closer to scientific articles. Meanwhile in lecturing, reading and writing scientific articles should be attached to higher education. Scientific articles are learning resources which credibility is maintained, because in the process of publishing them through a review scheme.\textsuperscript{13}

### Categorization of Student Self-Efficacy Scores Writing Scientific Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>$X &lt; 37$</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>$37 \leq X \leq 50$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$51 \leq X \leq 64$</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>$65 \leq X \leq 78$</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>68.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>$79 \leq X \leq 92$</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data above, it is found that the majority of respondents have high self-efficacy scores in writing scientific articles, 35 respondents or 68.63% of the total respondents. Meanwhile, there are 12 students (23.52%) who are in the moderate category, 1 person...

has a low self-efficacy score, and there are 3 respondents who have a very high efficacy score. From 51 research respondents, the average self-efficacy score of students writing scientific articles was 65 which was in the high category. This means that students have high confidence in being able to complete the final task of making an article to be published in scientific journals.

This result is quite surprising, the respondents admitted that they rarely (and some even never) read and write scientific articles. However, having high self-efficacy can write scientific articles as a graduation requirement. The respondents had confidence in themselves that they could write scientific articles even though they were not familiar with reading and writing scientific articles.

**Student Intensity of Literacy and Self-Efficacy In Writing Scientific Articles**

There is a correlation between reading interest and writing ability\(^{14}\). Those who like to read and diligently practice writing will have good writing skills, likewise with the ability to write scientific articles. Only those who have a good reading tradition and the perseverance to practice writing intensively will have the ability to write good scientific articles.

Research findings show that writing and reading scientific articles is not something that is commonly done by students. Writing scientific articles as a graduation requirement will be a foreign experience for most final year students. The majority of respondents (50.98%) are in the category of rarely reading scientific articles. In fact, 29.41% of respondents stated that they had never written access to articles in scientific journals. So what makes final year students so

confident that they can write scientific articles even though they are not familiar with the activity?

Based on the type, student self-efficacy in writing scientific articles has the same character as academic self-efficacy \(^{15}\). There are at least 2 factors that affect academic self-efficacy, namely factors from within the student her/himself (internal) and from outside the student (external). Among the internal factors are character, motivation, interest, resilience and patience. Meanwhile, external factors include goal orientation, verbal persuasion, enactive mastery experiences, warmth and attachment style \(^{16}\).

One of the reasons for the high self-efficacy of students is their success in completing previous academic tasks which they are not really good at. The experience of completing assignments only armed with surfing the internet, copying and collecting them easily makes final year students also confident that they can complete scientific papers.


CONCLUSION

The activity of reading and writing scientific articles is not a common activity for final year students. The majority of students admitted that they rarely read (50.98%) and write (56.86%) scientific articles. In fact, there are a quite number of students (29.41%) who have never written a scientific article at all. Interestingly, students’ self-efficacy in writing scientific articles as a graduation requirement is fairly high, reaching a score of 65. This means that final year students have high confidence in being able to complete the task of writing scientific articles as a graduation requirement. This confidence is caused by the experience of students in completing a series of lectures and assignments. Writing skills, especially scientific writing, are obtained from reading perseverance and intense writing practice. Universities need to bring the activities of reading and writing scientific papers closer to students since the beginning of the lecture.
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