

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

With the rapid globalization and advancement of technology, higher education has become one of the fundamental necessities for many individuals. In fact, there was a total of 700,000 applicants participating in the Entrance Selection of State Universities throughout all regions in Indonesia in 2020 (Perwitasari, 2020). On the other hand, along with this growth, there are also numerous emerging problems, especially related to the students' adaptation to academic learning in higher education. One reason behind this is that many of the youth face problems during the transition stage between high school and university, which is mainly due to students' prior expectations and the realities of academic learning in university. This later can result in severe anxiety, poor academic performance, and higher drop-out rates (Hassel & Ridout, 2018). It is noteworthy that this is also a prominent issue in Indonesia, because based on the 2020 Higher Education Statistics released by the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, there was a staggering number of 602.208 students dropping out from private and public universities in 2019.

To combat this negative development, the students need to be more aware of the different environments in higher education so that they can improve their academic learning. One of the effective ways to achieve this is through metacognitive awareness. This is because according to Hacker (2009), metacognition highlights the individual's awareness of their unique needs, the strategies, and the implementation in the learning process. Thus, once students acquire metacognitive awareness, their academic learning is expected to be better. Numerous research has been conducted with the result supporting this claim, and one of them is done by Young and Fry (2008). They found that there is a significant correlation between metacognitive awareness with learners' academic achievement. The findings of a similar research conducted by Kallio et al. (2018) also confirmed that planning and knowledge of conditions – which are a part of metacognitive awareness – lead to success in the learning process.

More importantly, metacognition is largely a part of self-regulation, which is imperative in the learning process. This is because by adopting self-regulation, the students are able to implement metacognition, goal setting, monitoring, and evaluating one's actions in their academic learning (Williams et al., 2015). In addition, Bursalı and Öz (2018) revealed that learners who are able to apply self-regulation can understand themselves better since they have the ability to identify their own shortcomings and strengths – which is also the primary focus of metacognitive awareness.

Therefore, it can be concluded that acquiring metacognitive awareness will allow students to be more prepared for their academic learning in higher education. Besides, this will grant them the opportunity to achieve better academic performance and reduce the risk of dropping out. On top of that, students can discover their strength and weakness from the metacognitive awareness indicators in their academic learning. Additionally, it is noteworthy that metacognitive awareness is not commonly researched in the academic environment of English Education Study Program of IKIP PGRI Pontianak.

All in all, due to these pivotal benefits, the research is aimed to discover the level of metacognitive awareness towards academic learning of students.

B. Research Question

What is the level of metacognitive awareness towards academic learning to students of the English Education Study Program of IKIP PGRI Pontianak?

C. Research Purpose

This research put an emphasis on investigating the level of metacognitive awareness towards academic learning to students of English Education Study Program of IKIP PGRI Pontianak.

D. Significances of Research

This research is expected to contribute in both theoretical and practical manner to the relevant field of study to these parties involved.

1. Theoretical Significance

Generally, the main purpose of research is to provide a new perspective to deepen the understanding of a particular field of study. Accordingly, it is expected that this research will bring forth contribution to the discussion regarding the level of metacognitive awareness towards academic learning viewed from numerous variations.

2. Practical Significance

It is believed that this research will bring beneficial impacts to the students, educators, and curriculum developers, and future relevant research.

a. Students

Nowadays, students are expected to be more independent and responsible for their own academic learning in higher education. Therefore, it is imperative for them to understand the relevant components that play a crucial part in the learning process, including metacognition. Ultimately, this research will grant the students the insight needed to comprehend their strengths and

shortcomings from metacognitive awareness factors, which will allow them to achieve better academic performance.

b. Educators and Curriculum Developers

As the parties that work closely with the students, the educators and curriculum developers should have a deeper understanding of the dynamic of the learning process. Therefore, further adjustment and development are continuously sought after to ensure that students are able to fully comprehend the lesson. This research will provide a new perspective on the level of metacognitive awareness towards academic learning to students.

c. Future Relevant Research

Due to the importance of psychological components in education, there is a growing interest in the field of metacognitive awareness, especially in the higher education setting. Therefore, the finding of this research is expected to assist future research related to this topic.

E. Scope of Research

All the crucial variables and terminologies included in this research will be explained in this section to prevent misunderstanding and ambiguity.

1. Research Variables

Academic research ought to address a problem that is measurable and observable. In other words, it needs to be represented by several variables, which are the components being studied and/or the characteristics of the subject(s) which is the source of information (Creswell, 2012). Hence, this research utilized the variables from the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) developed by Schraw and Dennison (1994). The two variables to represent metacognitive awareness are Knowledge of Cognition and Regulation of Cognition which involve eight indicators in total.

2. Research Terminology

Several terms are utilized throughout the research to provide clarity and uniformity to ensure the understanding of the overall discussion.

a. Metacognitive Awareness

Acknowledging and understanding how an individual thinks is metacognitive awareness. In an educational setting, it entails being aware of how the individual learns.

b. Academic Learning

Acquiring knowledge and skills through formal education is described as academic learning. In this context, the learning process can be said to be conducted through academic means, such as partaking in discussions, completing assignments, performing presentations, and taking assessments.

c. Students

Individuals who are pursuing education in order to improve their knowledge and skills are generally referred to as students. For this research, the students are specifically those undergoing higher education who vary in numerous ways (e.g., academic year, social background, academic performance, etc.).

