

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, objectives, significance, and definitions of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Student achievement is one of the primary objectives of studying in school. It is frequently considered a measure of effective learning and the overall standard of education. Steinmayr et al. (2014) define academic achievement as the level to which students have met established learning goals, nothing that it is closely associated with long-term success in both education and career pathways. Students who achieve high academic grades are generally perceived to possess strong intellectual capabilities and a greater potential for success in higher education and the workforce (Richardson et al., 2012). Academic achievement is essential for students, as it reflects improvements in their learning behavior, including positive personal growth along with the development of new skills and knowledge. It reflects a systematic assessment conducted by teachers, grounded in the processes of evaluating, measuring, and assessing students' learning achievement (Firman et al., 2020). The study also stated that to plan differentiated learning activities for students with low learning achievement, teachers must know the learning levels of their students. Understanding students' academic achievement receive appropriate support to enhance their learning experience. Examining the elements that influence

students' academic achievement, such as student engagement, is crucial given the significance of academic achievement.

According to Doménech et al. (2017), student engagement describes how the active participation, involvement, and investment of students in their education. It includes behavioral, emotional, cognitive elements, and social that collectively support students' academic achievement (Philp et al., 2016). Students show a stronger social connectedness in the school environment and increased passion for learning. Furthermore, individual learning outcomes are significantly affected by student engagement. However, a lack of student engagement can lead to lower academic achievement, dropout risk, and long-term academic struggles (Lei et al., 2018). Over the past twenty years, researchers have continued to be very interested in student engagement and how it relates to different school functions because of these possible results (Appleton et al. 2008 & Shernoff 2008).

Student engagement as a crucial dimension of academic achievement that has been identified by previous studies. First, research by Rajabalee et al. (2020) argue that student engagement is an essential part of quality education. In short, measuring student engagement is very important to know the performance and achievement of students. Second, research by Latifa et al. (2024) state that student engagement has a major impact on their academic achievement, helping them earn high grades, understand the material, and develop life skills. This result is in line with the study by Lei et al. (2018) which similarly argue that student engagement is considered an important outcome of academic achievement.

Other studies showed that student engagement consistently contributes to students' academic achievement. In this regard, there are two main perspectives. An example is a study by Lei et al. (2018) identified a significant and relatively strong correlation between student engagement and academic achievement. Furthermore, Olivier et al. (2019) reported a positive relationship between behavioral and emotional engagement and students' academic performance. These findings highlight that learner engagement is critical to enhancing their academic outcomes., as it encourages active participation in learning and supports a positive, continuous learning cycle (Tsai, 2021). Wang et al.'s (2018) demonstrated that the positive correlation between behavioral engagement and academic achievement is stronger than those between emotional or cognitive engagement and academic outcomes. Overall, the findings of earlier research show a clear link between students' engagement levels and their academic achievement.

However, researchers have not reached a consistent conclusion, as several studies have revealed no meaningful correlation between student engagement and learning outcomes. For instance, Olivier et al. (2019) found no meaningful correlation between students' emotional engagement and their achievement scores in math and English. In addition, a study by (Yin et al. (2020) found that cognitive engagement had only a weak correlation with academic achievement. Students with low grades may not have a strong foundation of skills, making it difficult for them to succeed academically, even when they try to engage more in their lessons. In contrast, students with high grades may already have the skills needed to grasp new material quickly, allowing them to spend less time

studying. These contrasting results imply that there may be more complexity in the correlation between academic achievement and student engagement than in previous studies.

Although previous researches already explored the connection between student engagement and learning outcomes, many did not specifically focus on distinct subject areas, educational levels, and age, group. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to investigate correlation between student engagement and English academic achievement among 8th grade students at MTsN 3 Kediri. This study pursues to address the limited understanding of how student engagement specifically impacts English academic achievement. To bridge this gap, it also examines the influence of gender on student engagement and their English academic achievement. By addressing this, the study provides a more nuanced understanding of how male and female may engage differently in the learning process and how this relates to their achievement in English. Another research gap addressed in this study is the adoption of the dimensions of the student engagement proposed by Philp et al. (2016) which encompasses four aspects of student engagement, such as behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement. By using these aspects, the study aims to investigate types of students' engagement aspect that influence their English academic achievement. This approach offers deeper insight which may have overlooked how different engagement types interact with academic achievement. This research is expected to offer practical benefits for teachers by helping them identify effective teaching methods that enhance student engagement and improve learning achievements.

B. Questions of the Study

Based on previous background, this study established the following problem statements:

1. Is there any significant correlation between students' engagement and their English academic achievement?
2. How do students' engagement and their English academic achievement differ according to gender?
3. What are the most significant students' engagement aspects that influence their English academic achievement?

C. Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the correlation between students' engagement and their English academic achievement.
2. To analyze how students' engagement and their English academic achievement differ according to gender.
3. To identify the most significant students' engagement aspects that influence their English academic achievement.

D. Significance of the Study

It is expected that the result of this study may specifically assist with:

1. The students

By understanding how participation in class, and engagement contribute to academic achievement, the founds of this research aim to provide insight and to help students recognize the importance of engagement in the

learning process. The results can also encourage students to become more active learners and encourage them to improve in English.

2. English Teachers

This study provides useful knowledge for English teachers on the impact of student engagement on academic achievement. The findings are expected can help teachers with more interactive and interesting learning activities that encourage student participation. They can also find students who have difficulty participating and apply strategies to improve their motivation and learning outcomes.

3. Next Researchers

Future researchers may use this study as a reference for exploring the relationship between student engagement and academic achievement They can build upon this research by exploring other factors that influence student achievement or by developing new strategies to increasing student engagement in learning.

E. Hypothesis of the Study

- Null hypothesis (H₀):

There is no correlation between students' Engagement and their English Academic Achievement.

- Alternative hypothesis (H_a):

There is a correlation between students' Engagement and their English Academic Achievement.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is to find and explain the correlation between students' engagement and their English academic achievement. This study is

conducted at MTsN 3 Kediri and focuses on eighth-grade students who study English as a subject. The engagement discussed in this study includes four dimensions: behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement, based on Philp et al.'s (2016) framework.

In order to limit the problem of this study, the researcher only focuses on the eight-grade students of MTsN 3 Kediri. Therefore, this study does not investigate the correlation between students' engagement and English academic achievement among students outside the selected grade or institution. This study also does not examine other factors that may influence academic achievement among students outside the selected grade or institution. This study also does not examine other factors that may influence academic achievement, such as students' motivation, learning styles, or external support systems. Another limitation is that this study analyzes students' engagement and achievement in general terms and does not explain the specific contribution or development of each individual student in detail.

G. Definition of Key Terms

This research is necessary to explain the following terminology to prevent misunderstandings and misinterpretations when writing this research:

1. Student Engagement

Student engagement is active participation or involvement students show in their educational or school activities, comprising behavioral, cognitive, emotional, and social forms of engagement.

2. English Academic Achievement

English academic achievement refers to students' performance in English subjects, typically measured through grades, test scores, and assignments that reflect how well a student understands and applies English skills in an academic setting.

3. Behavioral Engagement

Students' observable behaviors, such as showing up to class, participating, and finishing assignments on time, are referred to as behavioral engagement and seen to be a major contributor to academic achievement and a critical signal of their want to learn.

4. Emotional Engagement

By creating a nurturing setting that encourages deeper learning, and emotional engagement which includes students' sentiments of interest, motivation, and connection to their learning environment is correlated with academic achievement.

5. Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement is students' mental effort, self-regulation, and use of learning strategies, which play a vital role in academic achievement by promoting deeper understanding and effective learning.

6. Social Engagement

Social engagement involves interactive and collaborative learning among peers, emphasizing mutual support and feedback, which enhances

understanding and promotes more effective learning through shared experiences.