**Students’ perception of school environment and its impact on English academic achievement**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research aimed to find out: (1) the students’ perception of school environment at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar, and (2) the impact of school environment on students’ English academic achievement at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar

This research employed qualitative method. The subjects of this research were twenty students of SMA Negeri 17 Makassar, which were recruited through a purposive sampling technique. The data of this research were collected through observation and interview. The obtained data was analyzed through four major phases namely data collection, data display, data condensation and draw a conclusion. The data is collected from interview of 20 students of SMA Negeri 17 Makassar which is recorded and then transcribed.

The results of this research are presented descriptively in order to reveal the students’ perception comprehensively. It was found that (1) the the school environment at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar is conducive and supportive place for learning. (2) The impacts of school environment on student English academic achievement based on students perception: 60% students believed the impact was significant, 30% students believed the impact was not significant, and 10% students believed there was no impact of school environment on English academic achievement and there are two major facilities that have impacts on students’ English academic achievement, they are library and language based extra curricular (SEEDS).

Key words: School environment, perception, English academic acheivement.

**INTRODUCTION**

Education has significant role in students live as they grow and develop. In Indonesia, Education also became the main focus of the government and they have done many efforts to develop the quality of schools in Indonesia. Moreover, the quality of the school can be seen by their students’ academic achievement. Therefore, students’ academic achievement has always been a topic of interest for educators. Several studies have been conducted in order to find out the factors affecting student academic achievement. Many researchers have identified demographic, socio-economic, family and school factors as variables contributing to students’ academic performance. Some educators have suspected that learning environment play significant role in student academic achievement. Accoring to Eric (2005) the role of supportive school environment in promoting academic success has broad influence on students’ learning and growth.

Environment, according to Webster’s comprehensive dictionary, can be defined as the sum total of all surrounding of a living organism, including natural forces and other living things which provide conditions for development and growth as well as of danger and damage. According to Ajayi (2011), school environment incude the classroom, libraries, laboratories, teachers’ quality, and school management are variables that affected student academic achievement. Hence, the school environment considered as an important area that should be studied to improve students’ academic achievement.

Freiberg (1999) observed that some of the notable factors that may influence students’ academic achievement in secondary schools are; school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, teacher quality, type of location of school and class size. This is because, schools with a good and conducive environment that has the best type of teachers, instructional materials and physical facilities will produce better school alumnae with high achievement.

Past research studies about the impact school environment on students academic achievement have been conducted by some researchers. Lawrence (2012) investigating research on school environment and students achievement of standard students, his research focused on the impact of school environment in term of locality of the school. Odeh (2015) investigated the impact of school environment on academic achievement of students as the Issue of poor academic performance in Nigeria. The study indicated that school climate, discipline and physical facilities has significant influence on academic achievement of secondary school students in Zone “A” Senatorial District of Benue State.

Based on the previous research, the fact that school environment which include school climate, and school facility as the influential factor on students achievement become the researcher consideration to conduct a research only in the area of school climate and school facilities to prove whether these factors have contribution in students English academic achievement or not. As school environment might give positive or negative effect on students’ achievement, previous research by Odeh on poor school climate and poor school facilities lead the students to achieve poor performance, this is one of the example of negative effect of poor school environment. After this point the researcher tried to conduct a research on students with high academic achievement to know wether the school environment take a role on their achievement.

SMA Negeri 17 Makassar perceived as a famous school for its quality of students. The issue of high academic achievement in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar has been interest to the researcher. This has been the reason for the researcher to conduct a research to find out how the students perceive the impact of school environment on their English academic achievement and what the school facilities that SMA Negeri 17 Makassar provided for students regarding the impact of school environment on English academic achievement.

Based on the previous explanation, the objectives of this research were:

1. Investigating the students perception of school environment at SMAN 17 Makassar.
2. Investigating the impacts of school environment on the students’ English academic achievement.

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Previous findings**

There are several previous findings of researches have relation to this research. Lawrence (2012) conducted a research on the school environment and academic achievement. The data from 400 sample participants is used to determine the relationship between school environment and academic achievement. The result of this study indicated that there is significant difference in school environment in term of locality of school but there is no significant difference in the school environment in term of gender. The urban students have better facility and school environment than the rural students due to this fact school environment enriched with modern facilities makes students feel comfortable in their studies that result to high academic performance.

Odeh (2015) has investigated the influence of school environment on academic achievement of student in secondary schools in zone “A”, Nigeria. A sample of 250 teachers was used for the study. Each teacher respond to a 15-item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Influence of School Environment structured questionnaire (ICTQ)” was used for data collection. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The first finding of the study indicated that school climate has significant influence on academic achievement of secondary school students in Zone “A” Senatorial district of Benue State. The second finding of this study found that the discipline of teacherss has significant influence on academic achievement of secondary school students. The third finding also revealed that school physical facilities have significant influence on academic achievement of secondary school student.

Usaini (2015) has conducted research to analyze how school facilities, teachers and environment significantly affect secondary school students’ academic performance in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia. Descriptive survey research design was used in which data from 377 respondents was collected using self-administered questionnaire from 4 selected secondary schools within Kuala Terengganu. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample the respondents. The data was analyzed using regression analysis. The result of the study indicated that students from a school within adequate facilities, good teachers and favorable environment perform well than those from schools with fewer facilities, unqualified teachers and less enabling environment.

Sunday, A.A (2012) revealed that there is significant relationship between physical school environment and students’ academic performace in senior secondary school physics. The result of his research showed students with adequate laboratory facilities in physics perform better than those in school with less or without facilities, this simply because laboratory forms part of enrich the physical school environment. It also discovered that poor facilities and inadequate space, as well as arrangement of items including seats in the classroom, library, laboratory, would affect the organization of learning environment.

However, those findings could not be applied in this study. Unlike the previous research this research was investigated the students’ perception about the impact of school environment on students English academic achievement in terms of school climate and school facilities. The researcher chose this title as her research because there have never been any research who conducted the study in SMAN 17 Makassar where the school perceived as famous school of its quality of students. This research will be different from others because the researcher tried to find out the perception of high English achievement students on the impact of school environment.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employed case study design. Twenty students were chosen by the teacher as the samples of this research . The data of the students’ perception of school environment and its impact on English academic achievement were analyzed by using qualitative data analysis supported by Miles and Huberman.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

***Findings***

1. **The students’ perception of school environment at SMAN 17 Makassar.**

The interviews showed that all twenty students perceived they were in conducive learning environment. The majority of comments were directed specifically to whether they felt their school is a safe place for learning. The majority of students (16 of 20) used similar response, such as “it’s very conducive” or “it’s pretty conducive” or it’s quite conducive. Two students commented, “the environment is good even though it’s not what I want it to be but it’s enough”, and “I’m comfortable learning here, teachers here are good”. It can be seen from data displayed below.

“So... personally I think the environment in my school is very conducive in terms of umm.. learning, socializing, and having a good relationship with my teachers and also my friends.. and so.. over all I think umm.. the environment in my school really help me to shape and grow my characters.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“... my school environment is that it’s pretty conducive.”

(student 2, interviewed 30/05/2017)

1. **The impacts of school environment on students’ English academic achievement.**

The first piece of this research question was what are the students perception of the impacts of school environment on their English academic achievement. The interview indicated that students feel safe and comfortable learning in their school, with this data and the idea of students perceive their school as conducive place for learning. The students interview were very significant when it came to their perception about the impact of school environment on their English academic achievement. It was found that twenty students had different opinion about the impact of school environment on their English academic achievement.

12 students (60%) who participated in this research perceived the impact of school environment on their English achievement is significant, most of them commented “the impact is very big”, “the impact is very strong”, and “the impact is big”.

“... I would say that the impact of the environment towards my English grades are very big... umm because you know in school we have like English organization to help me, also very good teachers and REALLY many communities to help me into improving my English.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“So, I think.. the impact is strong enough because this school has got library downstairs.. it can improve the students English skill because there are a lot of dictionaries, there are lot of dictionaries that can be studied by the students.”

(student 3, interviewed 31/05/2017)

6 students (30%) believed there is an impact of school environment on their English academic achievement but it is not significant or in their own words “the impact is average”, “the impact is not much”, and “the impact is normal”.

“So.. I think the impact is not so much, because the facilities is just a little bit.”

(student 8, interviewed 02/06/2017)

“Yeah, there is an impact but it isn’t strong.”

(student 16, interviewed 07/06/2017)

2 students (10%) responded the school environment does not give any impact on their English academic achievement. They said “it doesn’t effect my achievement”.

Researcher : “*Menurut anda bagaimana pengaruh lingkungan sekolah ini terhadap nilai bahasa inggris anda, apakah ee.. lingkungan sekolah yg seperti ini memiliki pengaruh?”*

In your opinioin, How is the impact of school environment here on your English academic achievement, ee.. is this kind of environment has impact?

Student 19 : “*Umm... enda’”*

Umm... No.

Researcher : “in your opinion how is the impact of school environment in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar to your English academic achievement?”

Student 20 : “in my opinion, it doesn’t effect my English academic achievement.”

The extract of data interviewed showed that the environment of SMA Negeri 17 Makassar is supportive in terms of promoting students’ academic success and also it helps out the students to improve their achievement in English. However, some students considered that the impact of school environment does not take place on their English academic achievement as stated by student 20, and student 19.

1. School climate

The second finding of this research revealed that the students in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar have good relationship with their teachers. Twenty students agreed that their English teachers are very open to their questions or problem related to English subject. Most of them also stated that their English teachers are very helpful and kind. It was proved from students comments when they asked about their relationship with their English teachers. It can be seen from the data display.

“... in school we have like English organization to help me, and also very good teachers.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“I think my teacher is very kind to the students. For example, I have questions and I directly ask her, then her attention will focus on me and she will answer it”.

(student 3, interviewed 31/05/2017)

Twenty students were interviewed and asked whether their English teachers are always helpful if they need to consult. All participants responded that they were free to consult their teachers in case they did not understand what they have been taught in class. Students respond when asked wether they could ask their teacher anytime.

“... everytime I try to find my teacher to ask for some help regarding my tasks, they are always available. So, I think.. I think it’s a plus point.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“Our teacher also give use her contact number so we can ask her anytime and my teacher always there for us”.

(student 9, interviewed 02/06/2017)

Another positive impact from teacher and students relationship was proved by the students interview, student 10 and student 12 stated that their English teacher gave them materials that encourage the students to use English. The other student stated that their teacher gave them feedback after English test.

“Our English teacher gave us assignment which is encouraged us to use English. The assignments make us practice our English for example like memorizing or writing, it really helps students to understand English”.

(student10, interviewed 05/06/2017)

1. School facility

The final piece of the first reseach question was how English academic achievement is effected by their school environment. The students interviews were significant when it came to school environment and how it affected their English academic achievement. 20 students were interviewed and asked how school environment factor such as student teacher relationship and school facilities affected them.

“I was not that much of an achiever but then enrolling this school people are really supportive in terms of asking me to join competitions and also helping me”.

(student 5, interviwed 01/06/2017)

“firstly we have great teachers that would teach us and whenever we want to ask them something that we don’t know, they’ll always try to help us. Secondly from school there are financial insentifies for example if we have competitions outside Makassar the school will support us financially,our alumni and seniors always couch us and help us through the competitions”.

(student 6, interviwed 01/06/2017)

“I spend most of my time in school with my extra curricular and in the library also in the class. In this school there is an extra curricular called SEEDS. It is seventeen English debating society”.

(Student 7, interviewed 02/06/2017)

This one student articulated a story about how his grade improved after spending more time at school. The student spent most of his time in school, in the library also in the classroom and after the school finished he joined English club which called seventeen English debating society (SEEDS). The student’s score before spending more time in SEEDS is 80 but after he joined it is 90 or so. The student felt significant improvement by experiencing one of the school’s facilities.

The school facilities which were found to have an impact on students English academic achievement are library, and SEEDS, which are obtained through interviews.

Environment refers to facilities that are available to facilitate students learning outcome. It includes books, audio-visual, size of classroom, sitting position and arrangement, and also school extracurricular.

1. Library

Library is one of the school’s essential which considered as a support to help students to access information and resources specifically in the area of literacy. Based on the observation, it is found that there are about 700 hundreds for students’ English book, and it is about 1000 including novels and dictionaries. In a break time, some students seem enjoyed to spend their time in the library. Some of them worked on their homework, their school project, and the other read novels.

The result from the observation above were in line with the result of interview, all participants stated that one of facilities which support them in their school is school library and the researcher continued by asking them question whether their school has enough literature for them or not. They gave various comments.

“The library?Oh yeah...of course the library has really good collections of English literature like some classics, umm like novels from Fitzgerald you know, the beautiful and the damned, the great Gatsby. We have that in our library.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“There are so many grammar books there which are quiet big books that we can read, and those books kind of hard to find in another place.”

(student 2, interviewed 30/05/2017)

1. SEEDS

According to Eccles (2003) participation in voluntary, school-based, extracurricular activities increase school participation and achievement. Participation in extracurricular might be a factor that improved students' engagement in school and achievement. During the interview, the students brought out the statement that guide the researcher to one major language based extracurricular in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar which related to English and they called it SEEDS (Seventeen English debating society). This research involved 20 students with high academic achievement and 11 students participated in SEEDS. From the students’ perspective, they said that SEEDS support them in improving their skills in English.

“I would say that the impact of the environment towards my English grades are very big, umm because you know in school we have like English organization to help me, also very good teachers and really many comunities to help me into improving my English.”

(student 1, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“I study by myself so I can improve my English skill, it’s not from my school environment. It is just I’m having ekstra curricular called SEEDS but other than that I think it’s not much impact to me.”

(student 2, interviewed 30/05/2017)

“I join an English club in my school and then so I have my seniors to help me in terms of winning competitions.”

(student 5, interviewed 01/06/2017)

Student 2 when asked about wether his friends in SEEDS help him to improve his English, he stated that his friends in SEEDS helped him a lot in improving his English, he told the researcher when he was in first grade he does not know much about grammar and then his seniors helps him and guide him until he could understand the basic grammar and until he memorized all of the sixteen grammars. Another opinion from student 10 comments about how SEEDS improved his academic achievement.

(student 10): “I spent like, before fasting month I always stay in school until 6 pm because we actually go home at 4 pm but I stayed until 6 pm instead. So two hours after school I spent in my extracurricular”

(researcher): “so you do like spend your time here and study English, is that correct?”

(student 10): “yes.”

(researcher): “how is the impact of school environment on your English academic achievement?”

(student 10): “I think it is really have an impact to my English academic achievement. The English academic achievement difference before I spend my time in my extra curricular is very significant”.

(researcher): “can you tell me your score before and after spending your time more in SEEDS?”

(student 10): before I joined it was 80 or so but after I joined it is 90 or so.

From the students interview, it is also found that there is positive impact of participating in SEEDS. The fact that students acquiring some kinds of supportive relationship, mentor, or role model with an adult was described by the students during the interview.

(Researcher) : “... what are the school facilities that your school provided for you to improve your English?”

(Student 5) : “umm... one of the facilities that I have found is if I want to join a competition the school will provide financial support, in terms of taking care of couches, and those couches will help me to achieve things.”

(Researcher) : “and the couch is from outside of SMA Negeri Makassar?”

(Student 5) : “some of them are from outside but most of them are our alumni.”

“... not only the teacher but also the alumni would like to help us and of course it will give big impact towards us so that we can develop our English.”

(student 6, interviewed 01/06/2017)

Based on the interview, six students reported that their seniors and alumni had a very great role in their success of learning. Their seniors and alumni gave them advice before joining competition, gave them motivation such as they need to keep what their seniors already got, guide and teach them about English at SEEDS. They help their juniors to get better achievement in competition and perform better in school, as the result their juniors see them as a role model. It is in line with student 4 comments who said their alumni guide the students and prepare them for joining a competition.

***Discussion***

This research was conducted as a result of my interest in how school environment has impact on students’ English academic achievement. It is a topic of interest that has been broadly researched for years in the field of education.

The aim of this research was to explore the students perception about their school environment and its impact on their English academic achievement as it occur. The two research question I wanted to answer were: How do students perceive the impact of school environment on their English academic achievement? What are school facilities that SMA Negeri 17 Makassar provided for students regarding the impact of school environment on English academic achievement?. To answer these questions I conducted a single case study at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar, interviewing and observing the environment of SMA Negeri 17 Makassar.

1. **Students’ perception of the school environment at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar**

The interview showed that 20 students (100%) liked their school environment. All students believed their school was conducive, safe, and they experienced feeling comfortable which support them in learning. It is in line with Byongg-suk, K. (2012) who stated that students need safety, health, and stimulating environment in which to grow and learned. Learning takes place effectively if positive and comfortable environment is provided for students to study. Another telling result from the interview of student one who clearly said that the environment in her school very helpful in terms of shape and grow her characters. It agrees with Eric, S. (2005) in an article of the role the supportive school environment in promoting academic success that when students find their school environment to be supportive they are more likely growing positive attitude towards themselves and behaviors towards others during the school day.

As student five and student six stated that the environment in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar is very supportive and one of them also said that she developed her English in school because her the environment in her school encouraged her to develop by providing an English club. The finding also agrees with the view of Grover (2015) whose research on student perception of school safety and how it affect their academic achievement indicates that student who feels safe in school will perform better.

However, contradicting statement was said by student 7. He had opinion that the school environment in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar is good though it is not what he wants it to be and when the researcher asked him why he brought out that statement he answered because for a school which perceived as one of the biggest school in Makassar it should have more facilities.

The researcher agrees with the student comments. Indonesia as a developing country still provided the state schools with inadequate facilities for example based on the research it was found that there was only library which considered as physical facility. The school did not facilitate the students with English laboratory, and free wifi as most schools already have that.

1. **The impact of school environment on their English academic achievement.**
2. Students believe that their school environment has positive impact on their English academic achievement.

From the interview, it was found that 80% of students believed that their school environment has positive impact towards their English academic achievement. 7 students of 20 students responded that the impact of school environment towards their grades are very significant. When asked about in what way their school environment gave big impact, students responded it was because their school pushed them and supported them in developing their English by provided extracurricular, and facilities such as library and mini library. Two students clearly stated that when the first enrolled to SMA Negeri 17 Makassar their English were not very good but after experienced one year in this school, their English improved and it was because their teachers and their seniors helped them by during that time. This current findings supported by previous research Usaini (2015) whose research showed that students from a school with adequate facilities, good teacher, and favorable environment perform well than those from schools with fewer facilities, and less enabling environment.

1. Students’ relationship with their teacher helps to improve their understanding English.

The final theme that ties directly to school climate which in this research it refers to students and teacher relationship. The finding of this research revealed that English teachers at SMA Negeri 17 Makassar has positive impact towards students English academic achievement. Teachers can give atmosphere where students feel free to consult with their teachers even it is not in the classroom. The data was in line with Crosnoe (2004) stated that school climate is the general atmosphere of school. Trust between students and teachers increase if the school encourages team work. Research also shows that students who trust their teachers are more motivated and as a result they perform better in school (Eamon, 2007).

1. Students English academic achievement affected by SEEDS (Seventeen English Debating Society)

During the interview, the students brought out the statement that guide the researcher to one major language based extracurricular in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar which related to English and they called it SEEDS (Seventeen English debating society). This research involved 20 students with high academic achievement and 11 students participated in SEEDS. From the students’ perspective, they said that SEEDS support them in improving their skills in English. According to Eccles (2003) participation in voluntary, school-based, extracurricular activities increase school participation and achievement. Participation in extracurricular might be a factor that improved students' engagement in school and achievement.

1. Students English academic achievement affected by school library

Students stated that school library supported them by providing access to information and student also stated that they can do their assignment in library because the library got a lot of grammars book, and good collection of English literature. The data finding were supported by Lance (2005), noted that collection currency is just as important as collection size. They found that schools with newer collections performed significantly better than those with older ones. The literature also indicates that the instructional role of the librarian is an excellent predictor of student academic achievement. It is in line with the student 13 and student 11 statements, they responded that their library there are a lot of grammars book and the library provide them for what they are looking for, the researcher then concluded that the librarian in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar understands to what kind of English books collection that the students need.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

***Conclusion***

The present research investigated the students’ perception on the impact of school environment of SMA Negeri 17 Makassar on their English academic achievement, and what are school facilities that SMAN 17 Makassar provides for students regarding the impact of school environment on English academic achievement. There are some conclusions related to the findings and discussion in the previous chapter.

1. The school environment in SMA Negeri 17 makassar supports the students’ learning and it is also a comfortable place for students to study.
2. The impact of school environment on students’ English academic achievement were categorize into three major parts, they are students who believed their school environment has significant impact on English academic achievement, students who believed their school environment has not significant impact on English academic achievement, and students who believed that the school environment doesn’t have any impact on their English academic achievement.
3. Students with high English achievement believed their achievement were high because their teacher created positive learning environment where the students felt safe to ask questions and advise from their teacher. Beside teacher-students relationship, some students argued that their friends helped them in learning English, they taught their friends grammar and practice talking in English. This kind of environment with their teacher and friends, it supported them to improve their English achievement eventough their school did not provide them with many facilities.
4. There are two facilities that SMA Negeri 17 Makassar provided to improve students’ English academic achievement. Those were library, and SEED. Based on the finding of the research, it is found that the more skillful students the more they use the facilities.
5. It could be concluded the results of this research support the theory of Eric (2005) that supportive school environment improved students English academic achievement.

***Suggestion***

Based on the findings and discussion of the research, the research suggests the following items:

1. Students in SMA Negeri 17 Makassar should be encouraged to join Language based extracurricular such as SEEDS because students who joined SEEDS experienced supportive environment where students share their knowledge about English to each other and motivated by the seniors, alumni, and teachers to get better achievement in English.
2. SMA Negeri 17 Makassar needs to provide more facilities to students for example English laboratory, more English book and a room for extracurricular such as SEEDS.
3. Future researcher should try to conduct more research on factors affecting English academic achievement.
4. Future researcher suggests reapplication of the study by taking one class to be research participants since in this current research, the researcher has no control on selected the research participants.

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