



The Emotional Dynamics of English Language Education Students Influence the Learning Process

Amanda Mayang Sandya Loka¹, Yuli Mahmudah Sentana²

¹ Universitas PGRI Adi Buana, Surabaya, Indonesia; email: dinaraulia.1011@gmail.com *

² Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari, Indonesia; email: sentana@uho.ac.id

*Corresponding Author: *email corresponding author*

Article history:

Received: 3 August 2024

Revised: 28 August 2024

Accepted: 8 September 2024

Published: 9 November 2024

© Copyright: authors

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license

E-ISSN 2987-7741

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze how emotional dynamics, particularly heartbreak, affect the learning process of English Education students. The method used is mixed-method, with a sequential exploratory approach, where qualitative data is collected first through interviews with 5 students, then analyzed and continued with quantitative data collection through questionnaires filled out by 55 students. The results showed that heartbreak impacts on various aspects of learning, such as difficulty concentrating, decreased motivation to learn, lack of confidence, and delays in completing academic assignments. In addition, social pressure factors and lack of emotional support also worsen students' conditions. Thus, strategies are needed to help students manage their emotions in order to maintain learning effectiveness. This study confirms that emotional factors should not be ignored in the academic environment

Keywords: emotional dynamics, heartbreak, learning motivation, English education

INTRODUCTION

Emotions play a significant role in the learning process, especially for English Education students. One of the emotional feelings that can affect them is heartbreak, which often reduces concentration and motivation to learn. This condition can become a big problem when left unchecked. Some previous studies have discussed how emotional factors, such as academic stress and anxiety, affect students' learning performance (Krismiati & Reza, 2021; Sugiarto & Soetjningsih, 2021). However, research that specifically examines the impact of heartbreak on students' motivation, class participation, and concentration in the learning process is still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring how heartbroken college students deal with challenges in their academics as well as strategies that can be implemented to help them manage this emotional impact. Heartbroken college students find it difficult to concentrate on the subject matter presented in class. Their minds are more often distracted by deep feelings, and this causes them to lose focus in attending lectures.

In addition, feelings of sadness make students feel unmotivated to do coursework, which often leads to a decrease in the quality of assignments and delays in completing

academic work. In addition, feelings of sadness also affect students' involvement in class activities. They become more reluctant to participate in class discussions or group activities, and are more likely to withdraw from social interactions with classmates and lecturers. The loss of confidence caused by heartbreak makes them hesitant to speak or express their opinions actively which certainly becomes an obstacle to the learning process of students. In addition, heartbroken students can also trigger irritability which results in their friends often getting angry and often listening to sad songs.

This results in exacerbating the impact of relationship failure on their learning process, as they focus more on maintaining a social image than focusing on academic tasks. Lack of emotional support is often a big problem for students who face heartbreak support from parents' relatives and close friends. However, students who come from single-parent families. the emotional support they receive is often limited or inadequate, which can exacerbate their feelings. Single parents often face challenges in dividing their time and energy between work, taking care of the household, and providing emotional attention to their children resulting in students who live with single mothers may feel less supported when they have heartbreak problems because being a single mother feels that they also have many problems which cause them to be afraid to talk about it, resulting in the student feeling depressed Without strong support, students find it difficult to share their feelings or seek advice from adults they trust. (Salsabila & Fitriani, 2023).

From there students who have single mothers look for mature partners who can be a place to confide in them and in the end when the students are disappointed by their partners. The student becomes down and does not focus on studying because the student feels very disappointed. Students often have difficulty balancing personal and academic life, especially when facing complex problems such as heartbreak (Kurillah, 2020). Excessive focus on personal problems can divert their attention and energy from academic priorities, which has a negative impact on learning achievement. Difficulty concentrating leads to missed assignments, low grades, and increased stress and guilt. This imbalance can lead to burnout, loss of motivation, and decreased mental well-being.

There are several impacts such as a decrease in learning motivation, one of the real impacts that students often face when they feel emotionally focused such as heartbreak in this case they lose interest and enthusiasm for participating in academic activities, both in class and when doing independent assignments, they feel focused on romantic problems rather than academic problems, this has an impact on reducing their learning motivation Students who lose motivation often find it difficult to complete assignments on time, prepare for exams, or meet learning targets (Field (2020). This leads to frustration with unsatisfactory learning outcomes, which further exacerbates their emotional state making it even more difficult for students to recover and rediscover their motivation to learn. As a result, the overall quality of learning decreases, both in terms of academic outcomes and their learning experience. Their learning experience.

Heartbreak can cause difficulty concentrating in students, especially in managing their feelings. Focus on academic activities, such as attending lectures, reading materials, and doing assignments, becomes distracted, making it difficult to receive information from lecturers properly. As a result, students feel left behind compared to their peers,

which adds to frustration and pressure (Ariyanti 2017).

In the long run, this disengagement can hinder the development of student's communication and collaboration skills, creating a negative cycle that impacts their academic outcomes as well as their social relationships in the campus environment. Decreased academic performance Emotionally overwhelmed students often find it difficult to focus and give their entire attention to academic tasks such as writing an article or making a presentation. Negative emotions that constantly dominate their minds can interfere with their ability to think critically, process information, and manage time efficiently (Sugiarto, 2021). As a result, they often produce substandard academic work in terms of timeliness and quality, ultimately impacting grades and learning outcomes. When students fail to meet academic expectations, such as getting good grades or completing assignments by the deadline, they may become frustrated and disappointed in themselves. This disappointment can trigger a negative cycle where their low academic performance exacerbates their emotional anxiety.

This study explores how emotional dynamics, such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence, affect the learning process of English Language Education students. (Krismiati, F. S., & Reza, F. A. 2021). By analysing students' experiences in facing academic and psychological challenges, this study seeks to identify barriers that can interfere with learning effectiveness as well as strategies to overcome them (Azwar, 2021). The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations for curriculum development that is more responsive to students' psychological needs, creating a more supportive and productive learning environment (Darmayanti, 2023).

METHODS

This study employed a mixed-method explanatory design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The explanatory mixed-method was chosen to allow the researcher to first gather general insights through quantitative data, and then deepen the understanding of emerging trends and patterns with qualitative data. In the early chapter, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires scattered to 20 lecturers from the English language division.

The participants in this study were university students majoring in English Education, as they directly experience emotional dynamics that can affect their learning process. For the quantitative part, approximately 55 students participated by completing a survey that measured the impact of emotional factors, such as anxiety and heartbreak, on their motivation and academic engagement. These participants provided reflective insights into their experiences, challenges and opinions, ensuring the research covered both the experiential and measurement aspects of the topic. Meanwhile, the qualitative part involved 8 selected participants who had significant experience in dealing with emotional dynamics that impacted their learning process, to delve deeper into how emotions affected their concentration, participation and academic achievement. the research was conducted in December 2024 for 1 month. The instruments used in this study consisted of a series of structured survey questionnaires for the quantitative part and interview questions for the qualitative part. The survey questionnaires used Likert scales to evaluate the effect of emotional dynamics on students' motivation, concentration, and academic participation in learning English.

For the qualitative instrument, the interview questions were carefully designed to gather more in-depth reflections and explanations from the participants regarding their experiences in dealing with emotional dynamics, the challenges faced, and the impact on their academic engagement and achievement.

Each interview consisted of 8 open-ended questions designed to explore various aspects of students' emotional dynamics in the learning process. Key themes discussed in the interviews included academic experiences when facing emotional changes, where respondents discussed how feelings such as anxiety, stress, and heartbreak affected their concentration and motivation in learning; challenges faced, where they resolved difficulties in maintaining focus and engagement in class due to certain emotional conditions; emotional management strategies, where they shared the ways they used to cope with the emotional impact on learning; and emotional impact on social interactions in the academic environment, in addition to reflecting on how emotional changes affected participation in class discussions and relationships with lecturers and peers. In addition, the interviews also highlighted lessons learned, where students provided insights into how they developed emotional resilience and strategies to maintain a balance between the emotional and academic aspects of their college life.

This research was conducted through three main stages, namely the first stage is preparation, which includes the preparation of research instruments, namely questionnaires for quantitative surveys and interview guidelines for qualitative data. In addition, validity and reliability tests of the instruments were carried out and participant selection was carried out using purposive sampling techniques. The second stage is data collection. Questionnaires were distributed to 55 English Education students to measure the impact of emotional dynamics on motivation and academic participation. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight students selected based on the survey results to explore their experiences in dealing with emotional dynamics during the learning process. The third stage is reporting the results, where the research findings are analysed and interpreted to better understand how emotional dynamics affect the learning process of English Education students.

This study used a mixed method with data analysis in two stages: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics to describe the level of anxiety, stress, and heartbreak in relation to learning. Pearson correlation test was used to see the relationship between emotional dynamics and academic variables, while simple linear regression was applied to measure the extent to which emotional factors affect student motivation and participation. Meanwhile, qualitative data from in-depth interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. This process involves transcribing interviews, coding data, and identifying recurring patterns to categorize findings into main themes that reflect students' experiences and perspectives on emotional dynamics in learning. The interview results were then compared with quantitative data to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

To ensure measurement consistency, a reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, where the analysis results showed a value above 0.7, indicating that the instrument had a high level of reliability. Data triangulation was also applied in this study by comparing the results of quantitative and qualitative analysis to ensure the alignment of findings. In addition, member checking techniques were carried out by asking several interview participants to review the results of data transcription and

interpretation to ensure accuracy and proper representation of their experiences. By implementing various validation techniques, this study is expected to produce accurate, reliable data that can provide a deeper understanding of how the emotional dynamics of English Language Education students affect their learning process.

RESULTS

The questionnaire results showed that 38.3% of students experienced difficulty concentrating in class due to heartbreak, while 27.0% said they never experienced it. Meanwhile, 23.6% of respondents said they sometimes have difficulty, and 11.1% often experience concentration problems due to emotional problems. Meanwhile, the interview results show that students who experience heartbreak often feel their minds are distracted during learning. Some of them find it difficult to focus especially if they are in the same academic environment with their ex-partner. However, there were also students who stated that they were able to maintain professionalism in learning despite experiencing emotional distress. Other questionnaire results showed that 38.3% of students had difficulty concentrating in class due to heartbreak, while 27.0% stated that they never experienced concentration problems. Meanwhile, 23.6% of respondents said that they sometimes experienced difficulties, and 11.1% often experienced impaired concentration due to emotional problems.

The questionnaire results showed that 48.3% of students experienced a decrease in motivation in doing academic work due to feelings of sadness or disappointment due to heartbreak. Meanwhile, 37% of respondents stated that emotional feelings did not affect their motivation to study, and another 16.7% felt strongly affected by their emotional state. The interview results support this finding, where some students stated that heartbreak made them lose their enthusiasm to do their assignments, and some even postponed their academic work. However, others tried to use studying as a distraction from their sadness. Data from the questionnaire shows that 46.3% of students are often distracted by personal feelings while listening to lecturers' explanations, while another 42.6% experience occasional lapses in concentration, and only 11.1% of respondents are never distracted by their emotional feelings during lectures. The survey results show that when facing emotional problems, students have different tendencies in reacting to friends or lecturers. A total of 11.1% of respondents stated that they do not feel irritable or angry, while 9.3% of respondents admitted that they sometimes feel it.

1. Concentration in Class

Most respondents acknowledged experiencing difficulties concentrating during classes when dealing with heartbreak. Respondent Amanda stated that she struggled to focus, especially when she was in the same class as the person involved, saying, "I cannot concentrate when we are in the same class". Similarly, Respondent Arya admitted that emotional struggles often led him to daydream and lose focus during lessons. Respondent M even confessed to skipping classes because she felt emotionally overwhelmed. In contrast, Respondent D indicated that emotional distress from heartbreak did not significantly affect his concentration.

2. Motivation to Learn

Emotional distress due to heartbreak significantly lowered students' motivation to

learn. Respondent Amanda described losing focus and enthusiasm even though she continued attending classes. Respondent Arya admitted that his motivation dropped considerably after experiencing heartbreak, making academic participation harder. Respondent M revealed that her motivation deteriorated to the point that she isolated herself at home for a week without completing any academic work. Meanwhile, Respondent D reported a 30% decrease in motivation but mentioned using heartbreak as a motivation to improve himself.

3. Self-Confidence

Several respondents experienced a decline in self-confidence during heartbreak. Respondent Hakim mentioned that he preferred isolating himself and avoided interactions with classmates when feeling down. Respondent Arya also noted a drop in his confidence, particularly when speaking in front of others. Respondent M highlighted that her self-confidence diminished significantly, causing her to withdraw from participating in class activities. In contrast, Respondent D maintained stable self-confidence despite emotional challenges.

4. Academic Task Completion

Heartbreak affected the respondents' ability to complete academic tasks effectively. Respondent Amanda admitted that emotional disturbances made it harder for her to complete tasks when the individual involved was present. Respondent Hakim explained that his emotional struggles impacted his ability to focus on assignments. Similarly, Respondent Arya noted that he often completed tasks more slowly and with less focus. Respondent Meytha described a severe disruption, spending several days unable to engage in any academic activities.

5. Attendance and Participation

Although most respondents managed to attend classes, the quality of their participation declined. Respondent A and Respondent H mentioned that although they were physically present, their level of participation and enthusiasm significantly decreased. Meanwhile, Respondent Amanda and Respondent M admitted to missing classes during their emotional struggles, indicating that heartbreak sometimes led to complete disengagement from the academic environment.

6. Long-Term Impact

Regarding the long-term impact, most respondents agreed that the negative effects of heartbreak were temporary. Respondent Hakim shared that he needed about a week to regain emotional balance, and Respondent Arya stated that the effects faded once he was able to move on. However, Respondent M cautioned that without emotional support, heartbreak could have a more lasting negative impact, hindering academic progress.

7. Emotional Manifestations

The emotional manifestations varied among respondents. Respondent A expressed frequent anger and irritability, especially when encountering the individual involved in her heartbreak. Respondent D admitted to physically expressing frustration, such as hitting himself lightly, although not to the extent of causing serious harm. Respondent M described extreme exhaustion and emotional numbness, stating that negative emotions dominated her thoughts and severely disrupted her ability to study and interact productively.

DISCUSSION

1. The Impact of Heartbreak on Learning Engagement and Academic Performance

The findings of this study reveal that experiences of heartbreak significantly influence the learning engagement and academic performance of English Language Education students. Participants reported difficulties in concentrating during classes, diminished motivation to complete academic tasks, and a general decline in academic performance following romantic breakups. These observations are consistent with previous research indicating that emotional distress from romantic breakups can adversely affect students' academic outcomes, including concentration, homework completion, test performance, and overall grades. (MacCann et al., 2020; Ahmed & Ward, 2018). Moreover, the emotional turmoil associated with heartbreak often leads to decreased classroom participation and engagement. Students experiencing such distress may exhibit withdrawal behaviors, reduced confidence, and a lack of enthusiasm for learning activities. (Bustle, 2021; Jones et al., 2019) This aligns with studies highlighting the negative impact of emotional distress on students' academic engagement and performance, particularly when emotional regulation is impaired. (Krismiati & Reza, 2021). However, it's noteworthy that some students demonstrated resilience by channeling their emotional experiences into increased academic motivation. These individuals used their heartbreak as a catalyst to focus more intensely on their studies, aiming to achieve personal growth and academic success (Respondent 3, Interview, 2024). This phenomenon reflects the concept of *academic buoyancy*, where students effectively navigate academic challenges and setbacks by leveraging emotional adversity as a motivator (MacCann et al., 2020).

2. The Relationship Between Emotional Distress from Heartbreak and Academic Participation

Emotional distress resulting from heartbreak has a profound effect on students' academic participation. The study participants reported feelings of sadness, anxiety, and decreased self-esteem, which hindered their willingness to engage in classroom discussions and collaborative activities. Such emotional states can lead to avoidance behaviors, further isolating students from academic and social support networks (Ahmed & Ward, 2018; Jones et al., 2019). The correlation between emotional distress and reduced academic participation is supported by research emphasizing the role of emotional well-being in educational settings. Students experiencing negative emotions are more likely to disengage from learning activities, leading to a decline in academic performance (Bustle, 2021; Krismiati & Reza, 2021). Furthermore, the presence of supportive relationships, such as empathetic teachers and understanding peers, can mitigate the adverse effects of emotional distress. A positive classroom environment fosters emotional resilience, encouraging students to remain engaged despite personal challenges (MacCann et al., 2020; Respondent 3, Interview, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the importance of effective emotion management strategies for

university students so that they can maintain their academic performance despite facing emotional challenges. This study focuses on the impact of heartbreak on the learning of English Education students at one particular university. Therefore, further research can be conducted with a wider scope, for example involving students from various universities or other study programs, to see whether the findings are universal or more specific to certain groups. In addition, future research could explore coping strategies or psychological interventions that can assist students in managing their emotions more effectively, so that the negative impact on learning can be minimized.

REFERENCES

- Afifah, M. N. 2021. 10 Signs of Heartbreak Disrupting Mental and Physical Health. <https://health.kompas.com/read/2021/03/22/200200068/10-tanda-patah-hatimengusik-kesehatan-mental-dan-fisik?page=all>. accessed on January 18, 2022.
- Adani, A. H., & Cahyadi, S. (2021). The Role of Negative Emotions on Student Academic Procrastination in Working on Thesis at a College in West Java)
- Bahtiar, Aflaha Rizal and Vania Rossa. 2021. Psychological Impact: Here are 3 Things that Will Happen to a Broken-Hearted Person. <https://www.suara.com/lifestyle/2021/11/17/174301/berdampak-pada-psikologis inilah-3-hal-yang-akan-terjadi-pada-orang-patah-hati> (accessed on August 12, 2022)
- Fitriani, I., Apriliaswati, R., & Rosnija, E. (2021). Analysis of EFL Students' Negative Emotions Towards English Learning Process in SMPN 23 Pontianak. *Journal of Equatorial Education and Learning*, 6(6).
- Maulidah, A. D., Putri, E. N. R., Sari, R. A., & Fawwaz, M. Y. A. (2023). The Impact of Online Lectures on Student Mental Health. *Scientific Journal of Education and Learning*, 1(1), 10-14.
- Musabiq, S., & Karimah, I. (2018). Overview of Stress and its Impact on College Students. *Insight: Scientific Journal of Psychology*, 20(2), 75-83
- Fitriani, I., Apriliaswati, R., & Rosnija, E. (2021). Analysis of EFL Students' Negative Emotions Towards English Learning Process in SMPN 23 Pontianak. *Journal of Equatorial Education and Learning*, 6(6).
- Maulidah, A. D., Putri, E. N. R., Sari, R. A., & Fawwaz, M. Y. A. (2023). The Impact of Online Lectures on Student Mental Health. *Scientific Journal of Education and Learning*, 1(1), 10-14.
- Musabiq, S., & Karimah, I. (2018). Overview of Stress and its Impact on College Students. *Insight: Scientific Journal of Psychology*, 20(2), 75-83
- Pratama, R. S., & Zaimah, A. F. N. (2024). The Effect of Physical Activity on Mental Health and Academic Performance of English Education Students. *Journal of Innovative Learning Circle*, 5(9).
- Putri, H. W. F. (2024). First Semester Students' Difficulties in Learning English. *Karimah Tauhid*, 3(8), 9350-9357.
- Putra, I. P., & Supriyadi. (2020). The Effect of Outbound Move on Forgiving Behavior and Self-Acceptance in Broken Hearted Adolescents in Denpasar. *Udayana Journal of Psychology*, 1, 156-167.