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## Are Students at the School Acceleration Program are More Likely to Experience Anxiety Disorders?

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The Acceleration Program and the International Standard School Pilot Project (RSBI) are currently being held in Indonesia. Previous research stated that the anxiety of students with acceleration was higher than that of non-accelerated students (regular). Currently, the regular program has mainly been replaced by the RSBI program. This research was conducted to determine differences in the level of anxiety of students who take the accelerated program and the RSBI program. **Methods:** The study was conducted using a cross-sectional method, and the sampling was determined by purposive sampling. This study took the population of students of Junior High School 1 Purwokerto. Primary data were collected in the form of friendship quality questionnaires, Rahe-Holmes Social Readjustment Rating Scale life events questionnaire, body image questionnaire (Body Shape Questionnaire) and TMAS anxiety questionnaire (Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale). **Results:** Accelerated students who experienced anxiety above the average were 8 (40%) students and 12 (60%) students experienced anxiety below average. Non-accelerated students (RSBI) who experienced anxiety above the average were 15 (75%) students and 5 (25%) students experienced anxiety below average. **Conclusion:** There is a significant difference in the level of anxiety of students who take the acceleration program and RSBI, where the anxiety of RSBI students is more than that of accelerated students.

### 1. Introduction

In Indonesia, mental health has received little attention from the government. The number of people with mental disorders continues to increase; in 2001, the WHO reported that the number of people with mental disorders was 450 million.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that of the 220 million Indonesian population, around 50 million, or 22% have mental disorders. One of the most prevalent mental disorders is anxiety disorders.<sup>1,2</sup>

The prevalence of anxiety disorders ranges from 6-7% of the general population.<sup>3</sup> The female group is more prevalent than the male group. The prevalence of anxiety disorders in male and female groups of Senior High School students in South Jakarta and North Jakarta is 8-12%.<sup>3,4</sup> Anxiety can be experienced by

anyone and anywhere, including students at school.

In school, many factors trigger anxiety in students. Curriculum targets that are too high, a learning climate that is not conducive, very dense assignments, and a rigorous and unfair assessment system can be factors that cause anxiety that comes from curriculum factors, like the accelerated learning or accelerated curriculum as well as the International Standard School Pilot Curriculum (RSBI) which is widely applied in various schools in Indonesia. This study aims to determine the difference in anxiety levels between students of the acceleration program and the RSBI program for junior high school students.

## 2. Methods

This research is an observational study using a cross-sectional study design. The population of this study was students of Junior High School 1 Purwokerto who met the research inclusion criteria. The research subjects were grade VII students Junior High School 1 Purwokerto with details of 20 accelerated students and 20 RSBI students. The sample was selected by random sampling. This research was conducted from March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 by distributing questionnaires and informed consent to 40 respondents.

Anxiety level was measured by using the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (TMAS) questionnaire with an average value of 19 points. If the value obtained is below the average value, the level of anxiety is below average, and if the value is above 19, then the level of anxiety is average. The friendship quality instrument measures the quality of friendship and what is seen are questions 5, 10, 15, and 20. These four questions show conflicts in friendship. Score <16 indicates bad friendship quality, and a score >16 indicates good friendship quality. Life events are measured using the Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale. Self-image measured by the Body Shape Questionnaire with a score of <62 was declared satisfied and a score >62 was declared dissatisfied. This research has been approved by the Ethical Committee Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Jendral Soedirman (reference number: KEP/120/KE/UNSOED/2019).

## 3. Results

This study describes the various characteristics contained in research subjects such as age, gender, self-image, life events, and friendship quality that can affect the anxiety of the research subject. Accelerated students who have anxiety above the average are eight students consisting of 6 female students (75%) and two male students (25%). RSBI students have anxiety above the average, with 15 students consisting of 10 female students (66.67%) and five male students (33.33%).

Anxiety in accelerated students was mostly below

the average general anxiety, while anxiety in RSBI students mostly experienced above-average anxiety.

RSBI students who experienced anxiety above the average were 15 students, while accelerated students who experienced anxiety above the average were eight students. The results of filling out the questionnaire most of the RSBI students felt worried, afraid, had difficulty concentrating, and were not confident, while Accelerated students.

The results of this study with the chi-square statistical test (X<sup>2</sup>) with SPSS 15 obtained a p-value of 0.025, which is less than 0.05, which means that there is a difference in the level of anxiety between students of the acceleration program and students of the RSBI program at Junior High School 1 Purwokerto. The Contingency Coefficient value obtained is 0.334, which means that the strength of the relationship is weak.

## 4. Discussion

Based on research conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research, anxiety is more prevalent in young women than young men, as well as anxiety is more common at younger ages than in old age. During their lifetime, women (30.5%) have experienced anxiety disorders more than men (19.2%).<sup>1,2</sup> The ratio of the incidence of anxiety disorders between men and women is 1: 2 to 1: 3 and most patients start treatment at the age of 20. This is per the results of the study, in the RSBI program the number of students who experienced anxiety above the average was five boys and ten girls (1: 2), while in the accelerated program the number of students who experienced anxiety above the average was two boys and six girls (1: 3)<sup>5,6</sup> most feel confident and rarely worry. Worry, fear, difficulty concentrating, and lack of confidence are psychological symptoms of anxiety.

The difference in the level of anxiety between Accelerated students and RSBI may be caused because the curricula in the acceleration class and RSBI are almost the same and what distinguishes only the time, but the readiness of accelerated students is different from RSBI. Student readiness in question is physical readiness, learning readiness, and

psychological readiness of the students themselves. Psychological readiness can occur when individuals are ready to do something. If the individual is not ready and forced to do something, it will cause a sense of dissatisfaction as well, but if the individual is ready and asked to do something, the individual already has the strength and maturity that ultimately makes the individual feel ready to do it.<sup>7,8</sup> Accelerated students have met physical, learning, and psychological readiness. Accelerated students are indeed prepared to become academic products, from the start of entry they have passed several tests such as grade selection, entrance examinations, and interviews. It is different from the RSBI class, which only uses value selection. This difference can cause different anxiety between accelerated students and RSBI at Junior High School 1 Purwokerto. The readiness of RSBI students is less than that of accelerated students so during the learning process, many RSBI students feel less satisfied and have anxiety that is above the general average. Another possible factor that causes differences in anxiety between students of the acceleration program and students of the RSBI program is that of other curriculum factors, namely teachers who teach. Teachers who teach between the accelerated class and the RSBI class are different; different teachers have different methods of teaching. This can affect students' anxiety, because during school, in addition to interacting with peers, they interact with teachers.<sup>8-10</sup>

The body image that indicates the characteristics of puberty has little effect on student anxiety. Pengpid et al., argue that puberty presents new challenges by bringing about developmental changes, but most adolescents can cope well with these challenges.<sup>9</sup> Following the results of the study, it was found that the anxiety of students who had satisfaction with their self-image and those of students who did not have satisfaction with their self-image did not have a significant difference.<sup>11-12</sup> This can happen because most students can cope with these developmental changes.

## 5. Conclusion

There is a significant difference in the level of anxiety between accelerated students and non-accelerated students.

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