

# Uncoordinated Triangle Power Causes Burnout and Cognitive Distortion to Lecturers in Higher Education

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This study aims to analyze the symptoms and factors that cause burnouts and effect of self-esteem on the performance of lecturers in higher education and their cognitive distortion performance. The total of 79 lecturers was used as the respondents. The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaire via the online application. This study used the qualitative approach to quantify case of burnout and self-esteem toward lecturer performance. The reports were analyzed using a burnout and self-esteem scale. The results showed that the most influential factors that cause low self-esteem were personal character, especially regarding its capacity to control the emotion. Further, this study reflected that the primary factor that causes the burnout is not stressing, however, there is an imbalance of mental processes (thinking, feeling and behaving). This research also generated a formula to measure burnouts using the two dimensions of emotional exhaustion and cognitive distortion. Meanwhile, the method of self-esteem utilizes confidence and the reduction of confidence.

**Key words:** *Burnout, cognitive distortion, self-esteem, quality*

## Introduction

The quality management in higher education depends on the performance of the lecturers. Each lecturer has a variant performance in the implementation of quality management in higher education. One of the several factors that impair on lecturer performance is the workload. Lecturers are also expected to behave based on a balance among thoughts, feelings and desires (wants, dreams) because, with this balance, a lecturer can decide to act with the appropriate behaviour or action. The opinions and cravings are the three incredible strengths



orbits of intelligence that are part of the mind, while the mind complements the soul, which sets apart people from animals (Sianipar et al., 2015).

These three elements affect in responding to a stimulus and thus this event can be said to be the mental process to decide which course of action to be taken to act. The mental process emphasises feelings only support feelings and behaviours that emerge. Emotional reasoning develops if the mental process is based on the stimulus of feelings. That occurs because of the cognitive distortion that leads to irrational thoughts or emotional thinking. The lecturer often uses their emotions when facing problems at work without being offset by beliefs and desires. This is suspected of causing unpleasant feelings such as frustration, annoyance, sadness, disappointment, stress and hopelessness, all of which then leads to burnout (Loera et al., 2014; Akgun & Tektufekci 2017).

Lecturers burnout is commonly affected by the imbalance among their thoughts, feelings and desires in executing their duties and responsibilities (Boles et al., 2000) which affect their performance on the execution of quality management for higher education. This condition causes an increase in stress and a decrease of self-concept, self-esteem (Joshi and Srivastava, 2000) and depression (Paunecu et al., 2014). The impacts of those conditions include the reduction of work ethic, commitment and responsibility of performance. That condition is necessary to be detected earlier to prevent the decrease of lecture performance quality. However, each factor that affects lecturer performance should be evaluated to determine its formula to increase lecturer performance. It is crucial to know the fundamental dimensions and indicators used to compose the method. Burnout is the collection of symptoms that appear together as a sign of an abnormal condition, such as emotions as responses toward work-related stress (Patel et al., 2018).

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) state that burnout is a collection of the symptoms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment (Masclah and Leiter, 2016). Based on the illustration, the study purposes of analysing signs and causes of burnout and self-esteem on the performance of lecturers in the implementation of university quality management. Further, to get a burnout formula and self-confidence that can describe the emotional condition or feelings of the lecturers to their performance.



## **Materials and Methods**

### ***Samples***

The lecturers in the University of Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, were used as respondents in this study. Based on the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Indonesian Republic number: 4/VIII/PB/2014, the regulation states that the lecturers (respondent) were categorised in four categories as follow: associate lecturer, lecturer, senior lecturer and professor. A total of 79 respondents (29 of associate lecturer, 40 of lecturer and 10 of senior lecturer) filled out the questionnaires. The ethical clearance committee has approved all the procedures that included the individual objects in this study of the Faculty of Health, University of Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya.

### ***Questionnaire and Data Collection***

The questionnaires contained three scales; 1, 2 and 3. Each level contained ten-questions. All the queries that included on the census have been approved by the Language Supervisor Institution, Faculty of Language and Sciences, University of Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya. The questionnaire has been programmed on the following website: <http://quizburnout.id>. This program has been registered as the patent from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, Republic of Indonesia, with registration number: EC00201813575, on May 23, 2018. The online questionnaire can be accessed via the personal computer (PC) and the smartphone. The respondents were asked to fill out the question using several categories that arranged as the multiple choices, such as: never (1); seldom (2); sometimes (3); often (4); and usually (5). The queries on the questionnaire were arranged following the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to analyse the respondent burnout level and Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSES) to investigate the respondents' self-esteem.

The data was collected from one academic year 2017 until 2018. The research was conducted in three stages. The first one involved literature reviews and comparing study results of relevant investigations. Further, it is undertaking field surveys to find out how burnout and low self-esteem conditions affected lecturer performance. The second stage involved developing interview and observation strategies; creating continuous daily notes; looking for data from documents; seeking other informants; using triangulation to confirm the truth from the data. The third stage involved conceptualising for the burnout and low self-esteem scales; validating and testing of the scale as well as testing for reliability. Furthermore, the data was analysed and evaluated as well as improvements; identifying the causative factors for burnout and low self-esteem among lecturers which include symptoms or signs.

### *Analysis of Data*

The data was collected directly through respondents completing an interview. The data was analysed using the burnout scale and low self-esteem scale, this can be seen in Table 1 below. The validity checking of the respondent's answer was completed using the technique of extended researcher presence on the field, observations, in-depth interviews, triangulation (usage of various sources and theory), peer review and analysis of the contrary case.

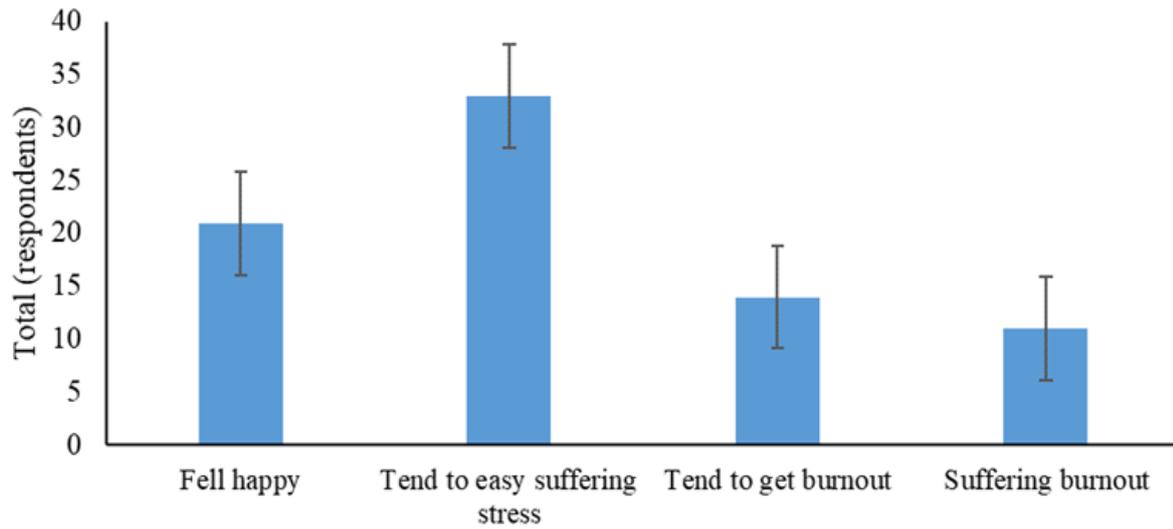
**Table 1:** Scale measurement to analyze burnout, self-esteem and cognitive distortion

Score	Burnout categories	Cognitive distortion categories	Score	Self-esteem categories
10 – 20	Happy	No cognitive distortion	< 20	Low self-esteem
21 – 30	Tend to stress	Normal	20 – 30	Normal
30 – 40	Tend to burnout	Tend to easy switch its cognition	>30	High self-esteem
41 – 50	Suffering burnout	Suffering cognitive distortion		

### **Results**

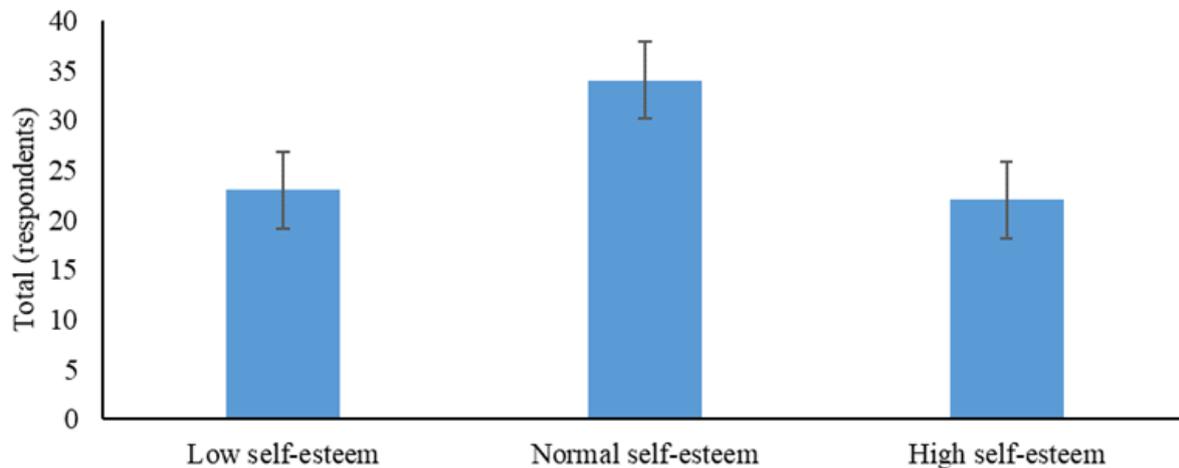
The scoring data of burnout measurement revealed that emotional exhaustion. A total of 79 lecturers (21 lecturers feel happy, 33 lecturers feel stress, 14 lecturers tend to feel burnout and 11 lecturers suffer burnout) (Figure 1). This study showed that symptoms were caused by workload, personality character factor including low ability to control emotion, low institutional support, environmental factors such as less the academic atmosphere that supports lecturer educational activity and high frequency to meet the student. It is possible inadvertently to cause emotional exhaustion (emotional exhaustion). For exposure of information data from measurements of burnout and self-esteem given to the lecturer to be filled according to the conditions it has. A two-dimensional burnout measurement scale, namely the dimension of emotional exhaustion; the aspect of error in response that is used to help find the subject of research.

**Figure 1.** Total respondent that suffering burnout



While the self-esteem scale is used to help find the subject of research, that is lecturers who have low self-esteem to its performance in the implementation of quality management. Further, a total of 23 lecturers have low self-esteem, 34 lecturers were categorised as average self-esteem and 22 lecturers have high self-esteem (Figure 2).

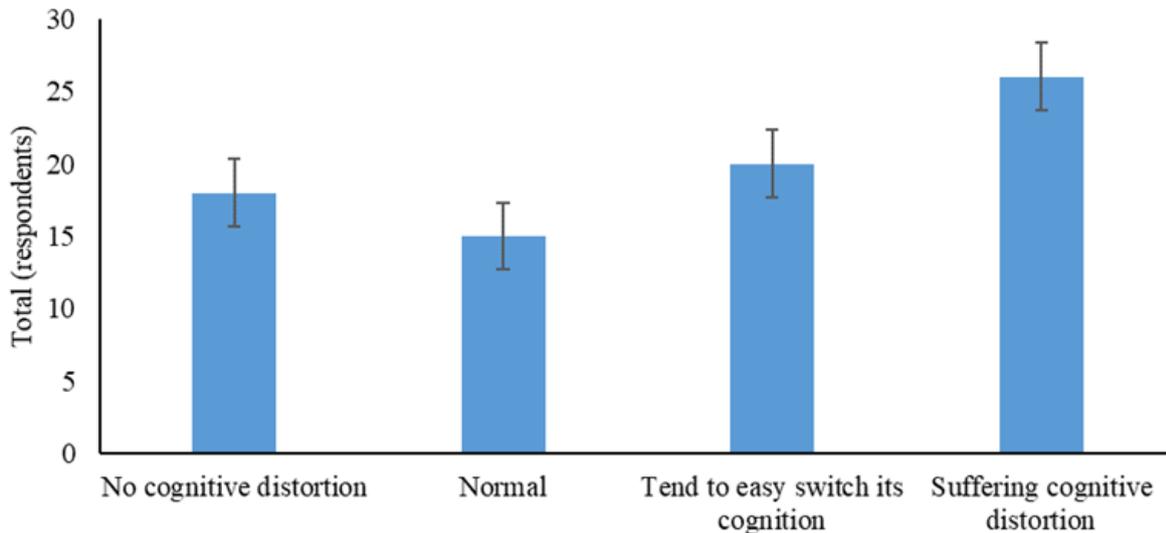
**Figure 2.** Total respondent with low, normal and high self-esteem



Based on the results, the lecturer for the emotional fatigue dimension obtained some lecturers who experienced burnout as many as 11 people and lecturers who experienced the tendency to be quickly burnout by 14 people. A total of 26 peoples experienced failure in the meeting — further, the lecturers who experienced the trend of easy mistakes in responding as many as 20 people. In the scoring result of self-esteem measurement scale to lecturers obtained several lecturers who have low self-esteem (Low Self Esteem) as many as 23 people. Based on the

burnout measurement and self-esteem analysis were found in another aspect, especially the cognitive distortion, as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3.** Total respondent that suspected suffering cognitive distortion



## Discussion

This study indicates several factors causing burnout and its effect on lecturer performance in the execution of quality management in higher education. Those factors include the burden of duties felt by lecturers was too heavy and weighed them down (Gastaldi et al., 2014). The workload affects emotional exhaustion and the work environment had not been maximal in creating an organisational culture and academic atmosphere that support their activity. Based on facts, the lecturers who lacked the capability of controlling emotion had not been maximal in the management of human resources. The emotional involvement includes relationships among lecturers and students of lecturers. This was caused by the everyday work of lecturers, always involving feelings which then caused their mental processes (thinking, feeling, behaving) to be unable to balance the three strengths or bits of intelligence of the mind and soul. The three bits of information are thoughts, feelings and desires. Meanwhile, the factor of stress is a condition that is temporary, non-permanent (fluctuating), changing, or shifting. That was shown through an experience the state of tension, but at other times not experiencing the same pressure.

The symptoms of a lecturer experiencing a burnout include errors in responding, the utilisation of emotional based on emotional feelings including un-objectivity of perception to make a decision, dishonesty, impulsive, unresponsive, dis-commitment, irrational that causes destructive behaviour such as being selfish or cynical, not completing tasks, procrastinating and being immoral. The emotional exhaustion due to the excess overuse of feelings, instead

of brainstorming. It is indicated by frustration, despair, sadness, powerlessness, tension, apathy, tiredness, irritability and anger for no reason.

The factors cause low self-esteem, including work satisfaction, an individual character in the capability to control emotions, success in lecturer promotion to a higher academic position and emotional exhaustion. Self-esteem is not affected by emotional exhaustion that affected burnout (Sheini-Jaberi et al., 2014). Lecturers often felt negative emotions, including stress, sadness, anger, avoid risk, act cynical, tend to feel unhappy about life and felt challenging to receive a critic. Lecturers under pressure always feels unsatisfied, unconfident, negatively respond and un-appreciate.

This study reflected the formula to measure the scale of burnout and self-esteem that can depict the emotional condition towards lecturer performance in executing quality management in higher education. The burnout measurement scale was composed of the most dominant factor which was individual character concerning the nature of personality. The result was that their mental processes (thinking, feeling and behaving) were unable to balance the three strengths or intelligence of the mind and soul, which are thoughts, feelings and desires.

It can be concluded that the primary source of burnouts is not stressed, but the inability of their mental processes to balance out the three strengths or intelligence of the mind and soul. It caused lecturers in their everyday work to often use the feelings than the thought that impairs on occur of the imbalance between thoughts and feelings, leading to the condition of emotional exhaustion. Meanwhile, stress was not sufficient to affect a burnout, since stress occurs when there is an imbalance between the demands of the working environment and the resources or abilities possessed by individuals. The study indicated that the most dominant factor that caused low self-esteem was an individual character, where lecturers lacked or had a low capability in controlling emotions. That manifests in a lack of confidence in oneself or the reduction of self-confidence. Self-esteem is as a positive or negative attitude from the results of the evaluation of a person toward oneself (El-Daw and Hammoud, 2015). However, both burnout and low self-esteem could lease stress.

Stress is caused in one way by a problematic and excessive workload (Salleh, 2008). Anyone can experience anxiety, but this may quickly become normal, due to the pressure shifting temporary. Work stress does not cause changes in attitudes and behaviours (Portoghese et al., 2014). This is different from a burnout which will cause negative changes in attitudes and behaviours toward work, institutions or even other people. This explanation shows that stress will not become continuous over the long term and thus weight will not accumulatively grow into a burnout condition. In facts, pressure does not often give impacts because it may behave potential effects such as to promote someone motivate to do better things (Lumban, 2016).

The dimensions of measurement found that someone suffering a burnout caused by two-dimensional categories, including emotional exhaustion and mistakes in responding (Nawfor et al., 2015). That is different from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) that describes the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. A burnout is the condition of someone experiencing physical, emotional and mental fatigue (Montero-Marín et al., 2009). The emotional exhaustion is the first phase of a burnout which occurs when individuals respond to problems utilising an excess of feelings without a balancing of rational thinking that affected depersonalization (Satriyo, 2014). Depersonalization is the second phase of the emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment is the third phase from nervous exhaustion. Those phases represent changes in attitudes and behaviours.

### **Conclusion**

This study proved that the primary source of a lecturer having low self-esteem is a personal character concerning the inability of controlling emotions. This inability of a person leads to a negative attitude toward oneself which becomes apparent from the reduction of self-confidence caused by the inability to control emotions. A burnout is not primarily caused by stress, but the mental process becoming incapable of balancing the three strengths (thoughts, feelings and desires). On the other hand, the tension was insufficient in affecting a burnout as stress is a temporary process of adaptation towards pressures in daily life.

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### **Acknowledgement (Acknowledgement)**

All the staffs and lecturers were acknowledged for their supports.

### **Conflict of interest**

The author declares that there is no any conflict of interest.

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