## Chapter One

## Introduction

The first chapter in this research is the introduction. In the introduction, there are several points discussed by the researcher including the background of the research, identification of the problems, delimitation of the problems, research questions, objectives of the research, significance of the research, and organization of the research.

**Background of the Research**

Academic achievement cannot be separated from learning activities, because learning activity is a process, while academic achievement is an output of learning process. Syah (2015) said that academic achievement is the level of student learning success in the form of numbers or words through tests given to students (as cited in Istiqomah, 2018, p. 2). Academic achievement can show how far students understand learning materials. As Istiqomah (2018) mentioned, the purpose of academic achievement is to determine students' mastery and understanding of the subject matter.

Academic achievement is often used as an indicator of the success of the learning process. Meanwhile, many factors contribute to student academic achievement. One of the factors that influence academic achievement is the student's personality. This statement is supported by Hakimi, Hejazi, and Lavasani (2011) who stated that predictors of academic achievement include cognitive abilities,

intelligence, mental and non-cognitive abilities such as personality characteristics, the status of socioeconomic, etc. It means that both internal and external factors, including student personality, affect student academic achievement. Rosito (2018) also argued that personality has a unique influence on academic achievement.

The definition of personality has been widely discussed by several researchers. Murfanya (2019) defined personality as a unique combination of psychological characteristics that affect the way an individual reacts and interacts with other individuals. The characteristics that often appear can describe the behavior of an individual such as shy, aggressive, obedient, lazy, ambitious, loyal, and afraid, are called personality traits (Ida & Tjun, 2012).

One of the well-known personality models is the Big-Five Model or the Big Five personality traits (Matthews, Deary & Whiteman, 2013). The Big Five personality traits are approach used in psychology to see human personality through five personality traits. Taufik, Prihartanti & Hamid (2019) mentioned those five traits, namely openness or openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

In this study, the researcher does not use the five traits in the Big Five. However, the researcher will only use conscientiousness which will be associated with academic achievement. As mentioned by Taufik, Prihartanti & Hamid (2019) above, conscientiousness is one of the five traits in the Big Five personality traits. Conscientiousness shows the nature of an individual who is careful and orderly in acting. In the handbook Personality Traits by John, Naumann, and Soto (2008),

Comrey (1970) mentions interpersonal behaviors of conscientiousness are orderliness and social conformity. Student with conscientiousness tend to be careful and they have high consideration. Furthermore, conscientiousness has been associated with academic achievement or Grade Point Average (GPA). This statement is in line with Komarraju, Karau and Schmeck (2011) who stated that a high degree of conscientiousness in students will give them more opportunities to achieve a high GPA (as cited in Cendikia, 2019, p. 4).

Several previous studies such as Conrad and Patry (2012) and Cendikia (2019) found that conscientiousness has a positive correlation with academic achievement. However, another previous study by Mahmuda (2017) also found that conscientiousness did not have a positive correlation with academic achievement. Therefore, the researcher is curious whether conscientiousness will have positive correlation with academic achievement or not and it encourages the researcher to conduct a research on correlation between students' conscientiousness and academic achievement with the "thesis" title is A Correlational Study on Students' Conscientiousness and Academic Achievement. In addition, the researcher wants to explore whether there is a significant correlation between conscientiousness and academic achievement of the participants in this study. These reasons encourage the researcher to conduct this study.

**Identification of the Problems**

The focus of this study is to determine the correlation between students' conscientiousness and academic achievement. Previous studies have shown different findings on the correlation between conscientiousness and academic achievement. In research conducted by Rosito (2018) and John, John and Rao (2020), it shows that there is a significant or positive correlation between conscientiousness and academic achievement. However, the research findings in the research of Mahmuda (2017) shows that conscientiousness do not have a significant correlation with student's academic achievement. Therefore, those differences make the researcher more interested for studying on the correlation between students' conscientiousness and their academic achievement.

**Delimitation of the Problems**

The researcher limits this research to one domain in the Big Five personality traits in order to be more focused. Big Five personality traits have five dimensions, such as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. However, based on the identification of the problems above, the researcher only focuses on discussing the correlation between students' conscientiousness and academic achievement. The researcher will use a quantitative research design because this study aims to find the relationship between two variables, namely students' conscientiousness and students' GPA. The instruments that will be used to collect data are questionnaires and GPA documents. This research is also limited specifically

to student batch 2018 in the English Language Education Department at a private university in Yogyakarta.

**Research Questions**

The following are the research questions determined by the researcher:

1. What is the level of the English Language Education Department students' conscientiousness?

2. What is the level of the English Language Education Department students' academic achievement?

3. Is there any significant correlation between the English Language Education Department students' conscientiousness and academic achievement?

**Objectives of the Research**

The following are the objectives of this research:

1. To find out the level of the English Language Education Department students' conscientiousness.

2. To find out the level of the English Language Education Department students' academic achievement.

3. To investigate the correlation between the English Language Education Department students' conscientiousness and academic achievement.

**Significances of the Research**

The researcher expects that the results of this research can be useful for teachers, students and other researchers.

**Teachers.** If students have high conscientiousness, the lecturer or teacher can help maintaining and even improve this trait so that students can achieve better academic achievements.

**Students.** One of advantages of the results of this study for students is they can understand more about themselves that their personality traits can affect their academic achievement. For instance, if students have high conscientiousness, they can maintain that trait to achieve better academic achievement.

**Other researchers.** The results of this study are also expected to help other researchers who want to conduct research in the same topic. Moreover, the result can be used a reference for further research.

**Organization of the Research**

This research consists of three chapters. Chapter one is an introduction to the research which contains the background that underlies the researcher conducts the research. Furthermore, this chapter provides identification of problems, delimitation of problems, research questions, objectives of the research, significances of the research and organization of the research.

Chapter two elaborates further about academic achievement, factors that affect academic achievement, personality, personality traits theory, big five personality traits, conscientiousness. In addition, the researcher will discuss the correlation between conscientiousness and academic achievement, related studies, and hypothesis.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology. This research uses quantitative research design. The researcher conducts the research at a private university in Yogyakarta. The participants of this study are the English Language Education Department students batch 2018. There are two instruments for gathering the data, namely questionnaire and document of student's GPA. The researcher shares the questionnaire link to participants through WhatsApp message. Then, this chapter discusses validity and reliability tests, and data analysis.

Chapter four explores the findings and discussion of this research. In the findings, the researcher describes the results of data analysis from three research questions, normality test, and hypothesis testing. Then, in the discussion, the researcher explains further about the findings.

Chapter five provides conclusions from the research results and recommendations for teachers, students, other researchers.