

## **Bridging the Gap: Empowering Lecturers through Effective Quality Management Practices in Higher Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to identify the factors affecting self-esteem and confidence among educators and how these factors influence their teaching effectiveness. The study employs a qualitative approach to explore self-esteem and lecturer performance. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed both concurrently and post-collection to ensure comprehensive understanding and immediate adjustment of interview questions as needed. The findings revealed that lecturers with low self-esteem and confidence often struggle with managing emotions and maintaining a balanced psychological state. The most significant contributor to low confidence was found to be an individual's personality, specifically their ability to control emotions. The study demonstrated that the primary driver of self-esteem is not stress, but an imbalance in mental processes. Additionally, this research developed a scale to measure self-esteem using two dimensions: acute fatigue and cognitive distortion. For confidence, the scale includes the dimensions of certainty and the reduction of certainty. These scales provide valuable tools for assessing and addressing issues of self-esteem and confidence among educators, ultimately contributing to improved teaching effectiveness and educational quality. The study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the role of personality traits and emotional regulation in lecturer burnout and self-esteem, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach in addressing these issues in higher education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of quality management in lecturer performance encompasses activities in fulfilling duties (behavioral processes) and demonstrating outcomes (achievements) that can be assessed based on standards set by the respective higher education institution. Given the significant responsibilities, lecturers must commit themselves to both their personal and institutional duties and be accountable for their accomplishments (Erez & Judge, 2001; Popescu-Mitroi et al., 2015; Saleem et al., 2016). Additionally, lecturers need to maintain a balance among thoughts, emotions, and desires (needs, dreams). This balance enables lecturers to act appropriately. Thoughts, feelings, and desires are three essential qualities of insight for the mind, which complements the spirit, distinguishing humans from animals.

The spirit is perceived as the representation of a person's behavior, manifested through actions (Adina-Petruța & Roxana, 2014; Dragut, 2011). As defined in the Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, the spirit encompasses the entire collection of inner activities of a person's heart, including feelings, thoughts, and desires. This understanding of the spirit forms my perspective. Therefore, it is concluded that human behavior results from the balancing process between thinking, feeling, and wanting. These three components influence each other in response to stimuli or impulses. When the psychological process emphasizes emotions, the resulting actions or behaviors are supported solely by feelings. Irrational thoughts or emotional reasoning arise when the psychological exchange is based on heightened emotions. This occurs due to cognitive distortions or thinking flaws, leading to unreasonable thoughts or excited reviews (Bush & Grotjohann, 2020; Şen et al., 2012).

The spirit is seen as the embodiment of a person's behavior, expressed through actions (Adina-Petruța & Roxana, 2014; Dragut, 2011). According to the Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, the spirit encompasses all inner activities of a person's heart, including feelings, thoughts, and desires. This interpretation shapes my perspective. Consequently, it can be concluded that human behavior arises from the balancing process between thinking, feeling, and desiring. These three elements influence one another in response to stimuli or impulses. When the psychological process prioritizes emotions, the resulting actions or behaviors are driven solely by feelings. Irrational thoughts or emotional reasoning emerge when the psychological exchange is dominated by heightened emotions. This happens due to cognitive distortions or flawed thinking, leading to unreasonable thoughts or overly excited evaluations (Bush & Grotjohann, 2020; Şen et al., 2012).

Observations of typical teacher practices reveal that many educators tend to consider their emotions before deciding on actions to take. This is evident in how they display their emotional responses to local issues. Initially, they do not analyze the problem's rightness or wrongness, or its positive or negative aspects, which leads to a particular desire to decide and act in a specific direction. Generally, they rely on their emotions to avoid unpleasant feelings such as dissatisfaction, disturbance, misery, disillusionment, stress, and sadness, which can lead to burnout. Teachers experience burnout due to the psychological imbalance among their thoughts, emotions, and desires while fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, which impacts their performance in quality management for higher education.

If this condition persists for an extended period and with high intensity without being recognized, it will lead to increased stress and a decline in self-concept and confidence, resulting in distress. The challenge is that quality management execution in higher education becomes ineffective when instructors experiencing stress tend to face burnout and have low self-confidence. These conditions may result from a decline in work ethic, commitment, and performance responsibilities. Emotional exhaustion adversely affects performance (Dragut, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial to identify this condition early to prevent it from disrupting lecturer performance in quality management for higher education. Identifying this condition can be achieved using a formula to determine whether a lecturer experiences burnout and has low confidence in their performance (García Ros et al., 2015; Zawadzka et al., 2018). This formula can be developed by understanding the symptoms and factors causing burnout and low morale related to lecturer performance.

Additionally, understanding the key measurements and indicators used to create the formula is crucial. Burnout is a collection of symptoms that appear as a response to work-related stress (Köksal et

al., 2018). The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which is available online, indicates that burnout is a collection of symptoms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Telef, 2011; Zawadzka et al., 2018). Burnout occurs when individuals experience difficulties (Zaremba & Smoleński, 2000). Self-esteem is a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the outcomes of another person's evaluation of self (Idrus et al., 2015; Telef, 2011). Self-esteem is a positive or negative attitude toward oneself (Brockner et al., 1993; Pierce et al., 1993). Pronto states that low self-esteem is a negative attitude toward self-concept. Self-concept is understood as the comprehension of the self from all aspects (Ackerman et al., 2002; Faw & Nunnally, 1968; Pierce et al., 1993).

Furthermore, understanding the key measurements and indicators used to create the formula is essential. Burnout is characterized by a collection of symptoms that arise in response to work-related stress (Köksal et al., 2018). The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), available online, identifies burnout through symptoms of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Telef, 2011; Zawadzka et al., 2018). Burnout manifests when individuals encounter significant difficulties (Zaremba & Smoleński, 2000). Self-esteem is defined as a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards oneself, often influenced by others' evaluations (Idrus et al., 2015; Telef, 2011).. It represents a positive or negative self-perception (Brockner et al., 1993; Pierce et al., 1993). According to Pronto, low self-esteem is characterized by a negative attitude toward one's self-concept. Self-concept is the comprehensive understanding of oneself across all dimensions (Ackerman et al., 2002; Faw & Nunnally, 1968; Pierce et al., 1993).

This study aims to develop a scale for measuring burnout and self-esteem among lecturers and to identify the factors contributing to these conditions, which impact their performance in higher education. The objectives of this research are:

1. To create a scale for measuring burnout and self-esteem that can describe lecturers' emotional states towards their performance.
2. To identify the symptoms and factors causing burnout and low self-esteem among lecturers.
3. To determine the measurements and indicators of burnout and self-esteem that serve as the basis for developing the measuring scale.

Understanding the balance between thoughts, emotions, and desires is critical for lecturer performance as it directly impacts their effectiveness in fulfilling their duties and maintaining quality standards in higher education. By identifying the factors leading to burnout and low self-esteem, this research contributes to developing strategies that can help lecturers maintain emotional balance and enhance their overall performance, ultimately improving educational quality. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the symptoms and factors causing burnout and low self-esteem among lecturers in higher education?
2. How can a scale be developed to measure burnout and self-esteem among lecturers?
3. How do these conditions affect lecturer performance in the context of quality management in higher education?

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Design

This study utilizes a qualitative case study approach to explore burnout and self-esteem among lecturers. The qualitative approach is chosen due to its suitability in providing a deep, comprehensive understanding of the emotional and psychological states of individuals within their real-life context. The case study method allows for an in-depth investigation of burnout and self-esteem, capturing detailed data from various sources to construct a holistic view of the phenomenon.

### 2.2 Participants

The participants of this study were lecturers from Wijaya Kusuma University, a private university in Surabaya. The selection of this university was based on the researcher's interest and its relevance to the research problem. Wijaya Kusuma University is one of the top ten private universities in the Coordination

of Private Universities, Group VII of East Java. The participants were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on lecturers who experience difficulties in fulfilling research requirements and academic duties. The demographic information of the participants, including their academic positions, is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Data of Lecturers by Academic Position

No	Academic Position Held	The Intended Academic Position.	Number of Lecturer
1	Do not have an academic	Assistant Expert	58
2	Assistant Expert	Lector	61
3	Lector	Head Lector	10
4	Head Lector	Professor	-
		Total	129

### 2.3 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted using multiple methods to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research questions. The primary methods included in-depth interviews with lecturers, heads of university organizations, internal quality assurance offices, and students. The interviews aimed to gather detailed insights into the participants' experiences with burnout and self-esteem. Direct observations were made to capture the natural behavior and interactions of lecturers in their work environment. Secondary data were collected from institutional records, such as performance assessment results and reports on lecturer compliance in proposing academic positions (JAD).

### 2.4 Instruments

Two primary instruments were used to measure burnout and self-esteem among lecturers: Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). The MBI was adapted to assess burnout levels among lecturers, focusing on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2019). The RSES was utilized to measure self-esteem, with adaptations to suit the specific context of higher education lecturers (Martín-Albo et al., 2007). These instruments were combined with the researcher's own observations and perspectives to provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of the data. The adaptation process involved translating and contextualizing the scales to reflect the specific challenges faced by lecturers in Surabaya (Gunduz, 2012; Idrus et al., 2015).

### 2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted both during and after data collection. The analysis involved several steps. During interviews and observations, immediate analysis was performed to determine if additional questions or observations were needed. Data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and themes related to burnout and self-esteem. Thematic analysis allowed for the categorization of data into meaningful segments that reflect the research questions (Brooks et al., 2018). Multiple sources of data were triangulated to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings. Triangulation involved comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure consistency and accuracy (Carter et al., 2014).

### 2.6 Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings, several techniques were employed. The researcher maintained an extended presence in the field to build rapport and gain deeper insights. The use of multiple data sources and methods helped cross-verify findings through triangulation. Peer review and debriefing sessions were conducted to minimize researcher bias. Additionally, analysis of opposing cases was performed to challenge and refine emerging theories (Xu & Meyer, 2012).

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Data Analysis

The data analysis provides valuable insights into the patterns of burnout and self-esteem among lecturers. The following tables present the detailed breakdown of scores related to emotional exhaustion,

cognitive distortions, and self-esteem levels. These scores were used to assess the extent of burnout and self-esteem, offering a clearer understanding of the challenges faced by lecturers in these areas. The results highlight different states of emotional and cognitive well-being, as well as variations in self-esteem levels among the participants. For better clarity, the detailed scoring is presented in the following tables.

**Table 2.** Data Analysis Results from Measurement of Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional State	Score 10-20	Score 21-30	Score 31-40	Score 41-50	Number of Lecturers
Feel Happy	21	0	0	0	21
Tend Easy Stress	0	33	0	0	33
Tend to Get Burnout	0	0	14	0	14
Burnout	0	0	0	11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>79</b>

The results from Table 2 provide a clear breakdown of the emotional exhaustion levels among the lecturers. Out of the 79 participants, 21 lecturers reported feeling happy, falling within the lowest score range of 10-20, indicating low emotional exhaustion. A significant number of lecturers, 33, indicated a tendency to experience stress easily, scoring between 21-30, which suggests they are on the verge of experiencing higher levels of emotional fatigue. Fourteen lecturers showed a tendency to get burnout, scoring between 31-40, while 11 lecturers scored in the highest range of 41-50, signifying they were already experiencing burnout. These findings highlight a concerning pattern, where a substantial portion of the lecturers are dealing with moderate to severe emotional exhaustion, which may negatively impact their well-being and job performance. Addressing these emotional challenges is crucial for improving their overall mental health and work environment.

**Table 3.** Data Analysis Results in Measurement of Cognitive Distortion

Cognitive State	Score 10-20	Score 21-30	Score 31-40	Score 41-50	Number of Lecturers
No Errors Occurred	18	0	0	0	18
Have Control	0	15	0	0	15
Easy to Error	0	0	20	0	20
There is an Error	0	0	0	26	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>79</b>

The data in Table 3 provides insights into the cognitive distortions experienced by lecturers, highlighting different levels of distorted thinking. Out of 79 lecturers, 18 reported no cognitive errors, scoring between 10-20, which indicates a healthy cognitive state. Fifteen lecturers scored in the 21-30 range, suggesting they feel they have control but may still experience mild cognitive distortions. However, 20 lecturers fell into the 31-40 range, indicating they are prone to making cognitive errors. Most concerning, 26 lecturers scored in the highest range of 41-50, suggesting that they experience significant cognitive distortions, such as irrational thinking patterns, which can negatively impact their emotional well-being and professional performance. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing cognitive distortions to help lecturers manage stress more effectively and reduce the risk of burnout.

**Table 4.** Data Result of Self-Esteem Measurement Analysis

Self-Esteem Level	Score < 20	Score 20-30	Score > 30	Number of Lecturers
Low Self-Esteem	23	0	0	23
Normal Self-Esteem	0	34	0	34
High Self-Esteem	0	0	22	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>79</b>

The results in Table 4 offer a detailed view of the self-esteem levels among the lecturers. Out of 79 participants, 23 lecturers scored below 20, indicating low self-esteem, which can affect their confidence and overall job satisfaction. The majority of lecturers, 34, fell into the normal self-esteem range of 20-30, suggesting a healthy and balanced self-view that likely contributes to more stable performance and well-being. Additionally, 22 lecturers scored above 30, reflecting high self-esteem, which is often associated with greater resilience and a positive outlook in both personal and professional contexts. These findings demonstrate a wide range of self-esteem levels among lecturers, with a notable portion experiencing low self-esteem, which may require targeted interventions to improve their confidence and enhance their professional engagement.

### ***3.2 Factors Contributing to Burnout***

The data gathered from interviews with lecturers highlighted several critical factors contributing to burnout. A predominant factor identified was the overwhelming workload, which significantly hampers lecturers' ability to perform their duties effectively. Many participants expressed feeling inundated by administrative responsibilities, research obligations, and teaching duties. For instance, Lecturer A remarked, "The sheer volume of administrative and research tasks leaves me with little time to focus on my teaching responsibilities." This sentiment was echoed across multiple interviews, underscoring the pervasive nature of workload-related stress. The lack of a supportive academic climate and inadequate institutional support further exacerbates this issue, making it challenging for lecturers to manage their responsibilities effectively (Saleem et al., 2016; Zawadzka et al., 2018).

### ***3.3 Emotional Regulation and Personality Traits***

The findings also revealed that individual personality traits significantly impact the susceptibility to burnout among lecturers. Several participants demonstrated difficulties in emotional regulation, a critical factor contributing to increased stress and eventual burnout. As observed, some lecturers struggle to manage their emotions in response to professional stressors. Lecturer B noted, "I often find myself overwhelmed by negative feedback from students and colleagues, which sometimes leads to an inability to maintain emotional composure." This inability to regulate emotions was identified as a key contributor to burnout, with lecturers reacting more intensely to stressors, accelerating the burnout process. To address this, the establishment of a supportive academic environment is essential, promoting a culture of support and collaboration. Initiatives such as peer support groups, mentoring programs, and professional development opportunities focusing on emotional intelligence and stress management are vital (Christian, 2015; Gunduz, 2012).

### ***3.4 Symptoms of Burnout***

Burnout manifests through a range of emotional and behavioral symptoms, as reported by the lecturers. Common symptoms include impaired judgment, reliance on emotional reasoning, procrastination, and avoidance of responsibility. For example, Lecturer C admitted, "I frequently delay grading assignments because I feel too exhausted and unmotivated to complete them." This procrastination can lead to a decline in teaching quality. Furthermore, burnout often results in impulsive behavior, lack of objectivity, and a propensity to deflect responsibility, all of which were noted as critical issues. Lecturers experiencing burnout may find it challenging to think objectively, often resorting to emotional reasoning, which can result in poor decision-making and adverse outcomes (Ashtari et al., 2009; Maslach et al., 2008). These symptoms ultimately compromise lecturers' ability to fulfill their roles effectively, perpetuating a cycle of increasing stress and diminishing performance.

### ***3.5 Impact of Low Self-Esteem***

Low self-esteem was identified as a prevalent issue among lecturers, influenced by factors such as job satisfaction, emotional self-regulation, and professional achievements. Several lecturers reported feelings of inadequacy and diminished confidence, particularly when they perceived themselves as failing to meet professional expectations. Lecturer D shared, "The lack of recognition from the institution and colleagues makes me doubt my capabilities as an educator." The absence of

acknowledgment or praise from peers, superiors, or the institution contributes to a diminished sense of self-worth. The study found that lecturers with low self-esteem often struggled with emotional regulation, exacerbating feelings of inadequacy and further lowering self-confidence (Idrus et al., 2015; Martín-Albo et al., 2007; Reilly et al., 2014). This creates a negative feedback loop, where poor self-esteem leads to inadequate emotional regulation, which in turn exacerbates low self-esteem.

### 3.6 Implications for Higher Education

The findings of this study hold significant implications for the management and support structures within higher education institutions. Understanding the factors contributing to burnout and low self-esteem among lecturers is crucial for developing effective strategies to support their well-being and enhance their performance. By addressing these underlying issues, institutions can foster a more supportive and productive academic environment. This involves providing adequate institutional support, creating a supportive academic climate, and offering professional development opportunities aimed at helping lecturers manage their workload and improve their emotional regulation skills. Such initiatives are essential not only for improving teaching and learning outcomes but also for enhancing job satisfaction and retention among lecturers.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature by elucidating specific factors that contribute to burnout and low self-esteem in higher education. While previous research has emphasized the impact of heavy workloads and insufficient institutional support on lecturer burnout (Christian, 2015; Maslach et al., 2008), this study offers new insights into the role of personality traits and emotional regulation. By integrating these findings with existing literature, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing lecturer burnout and self-esteem.

### 3.7 Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study suggest a close linkage between burnout, self-esteem, emotional regulation, and personality traits. This underscores the necessity of addressing emotional and psychological factors in strategies aimed at reducing burnout and improving self-esteem among lecturers. The findings advocate for a holistic approach that considers both institutional and individual factors. This approach can help in designing more effective interventions to enhance the well-being and performance of lecturers, ultimately leading to higher educational quality and improved outcomes for students.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study found that burnout among lecturers is not just due to stress, but to an imbalance in managing thoughts, emotions, and desires. Lecturers often rely more on emotions than on rational thinking, leading to fatigue and burnout. The research identified two key aspects of burnout: emotional exhaustion and cognitive distortions, which are irrational thought patterns causing negative emotions and behaviors. Addressing these distortions is important for improving mental health. The findings suggest that burnout affects lecturers' performance and the quality of education. To address this, institutions should improve support systems, provide professional development, encourage collaboration, use student feedback for improvement, and foster open communication between lecturers and management. These steps could enhance teaching, job satisfaction, and institutional quality. The study also highlighted the need to explore emotional and psychological factors in tackling burnout, offering new insights into the role of personality and emotional regulation. Future research should continue exploring these areas for a more holistic approach to improving lecturers' well-being and performance.

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