

Construction of Academic Discipline Meaning by Students in Campus Rules Practice (Qualitative Study at AMIK Bukittinggi)

Denis Haruna^{1*}, Rhafiiqul Azhari Karim², Januar³

¹²³UIN Sjech M. Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi

harunadennis@gmail.com, rafiqulazharikarim@gmail.com,

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received December 18, 2025

Revised January 30, 2026

Accepted February 5, 2026

Keywords: Academic Discipline, Meaning Construction, Discipline Awareness

This study aims to understand how AMIK Bukittinggi students construct the meaning of academic discipline through campus rules and regulations. The issue raised is how discipline is understood, internalized, and applied by students in the context of academic life and the surrounding local culture. This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore students' subjective experiences through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The results show that academic discipline is not only understood as a form of compliance with formal rules, but also as an expression of academic responsibility, moral identity, and a mechanism for adapting to the higher education system. Students interpret discipline flexibly and contextually, while Minangkabau cultural values reinforce the meaning of discipline as a form of self-control and personal honor. In conclusion, academic discipline at AMIK Bukittinggi is a dynamic and reflective social construct that develops through interactions between institutional values, culture, and individual experiences, and is an important foundation in shaping students' character and professional ethics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic discipline is one of the main pillars in shaping academic culture in higher education. Students, as part of the scientific community, are not only required to comply with formal campus rules, but also to internalize the values of discipline rooted in moral responsibility, self-awareness, and respect for the academic social order. In the context of higher education in Indonesia, the issue of student discipline has become increasingly important amid institutions' efforts to strengthen academic order and character. As stated by Wabiser & Irianto, (2024), Student discipline issues often arise due to a mismatch between institutional values and the meanings constructed by students themselves. At AMIK Bukittinggi, campus rules and regulations serve not only as a control mechanism, but also as a vehicle for social learning where students interpret and negotiate the meaning of discipline in their academic life.

Studies on academic discipline have been conducted extensively, particularly in the context of shaping academic culture and student character. Research by Jalaludin et al., (2024)

shows that academic culture plays an important role in fostering scientific attitudes and awareness of campus rules. Meanwhile, research by Nasution, (2023) emphasizes that civic education can shape students' awareness to comply with institutional rules. On the other hand, studies by Sinabutar et al., (2023) emphasizes the importance of moral and ethical education in building disciplined behavior on campus. However, the majority of these studies still focus on the normative aspects of discipline, namely the application of rules and sanctions, without exploring how students themselves construct and interpret the meaning of discipline through their daily experiences in the academic environment.

The research gap arises from the lack of studies that highlight the construction of academic discipline from the perspective of students. This study is novel in that it seeks to understand discipline not merely as an object of supervision or institutional policy, but as a social construct that emerges from students' interactions and reflections on campus rules and regulations. In other words, this study seeks to explore how students actively negotiate the meaning of “discipline” based on their experiences, values, and social contexts at AMIK Bukittinggi. This approach provides a new perspective that academic discipline is not only something that is “instilled,” but also something that is consciously “constructed” by the students themselves. The main issue addressed in this study is: how do students construct the meaning of academic discipline through their involvement in campus rules and regulations? This question develops into more specific sub-issues, such as how students understand campus rules, how students interpret the application of sanctions, and how social interactions on campus influence the process of forming disciplinary awareness. Through these questions, the study seeks to reveal the subjective dimensions of students' experiences in understanding campus regulations, which have tended to be viewed merely as coercive instruments.

The research approach used is qualitative with a constructivist paradigm. This approach places students as active subjects in the process of creating meaning from the campus rules they follow. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and analysis of regulatory documents. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and meanings that emerged from the students' experiences. This approach allowed researchers to understand discipline as a dynamic social reality, rather than a static concept governed solely by formal policies. In an empirical context, research by Purnomo et al., (2025) emphasizes that the formation of student discipline is often hampered by weak individual awareness and inconsistency in the implementation of rules. In addition, many educational institutions still emphasize control rather than moral awareness. Therefore, this study attempts to provide a new perspective that discipline should be understood as a cultural and social process that involves reflection on the values, emotions, and experiences of students regarding the applicable disciplinary system.

Theoretically, this study is based on the social construction theory of meaning and Weber's social action theory. Within this framework, academic discipline is understood as a social construct formed through interactions between individuals in the campus environment. As explained by Pohan et al., (2025), The process of constructing meaning occurs through dialogue, experience, and individual reflection on existing social norms. Thus, discipline in an academic environment is not only formed by formal regulations, but also by the process of meaning-making and internalization of values by the students themselves. The urgency of this research arises from the need to understand the dynamics of student discipline amid changes in modern academic culture. At AMIK Bukittinggi, a technology and vocational-based higher education institution, the values of discipline include aspects of academic discipline, time management, and professional ethics. Through a deep understanding of how students perceive discipline, this research is expected to provide input for the development of campus regulations that are more participatory, humanistic, and adaptive to the needs of the current generation of students.

Overall, this study aims to: (1) describe students' experiences in undergoing campus disciplinary practices, (2) identify the construction of academic discipline meanings built by students, and (3) explain the social and cultural factors that influence this construction process. The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational sociology studies, as well as practically to higher education institutions in developing campus management that emphasizes not only compliance, but also student awareness and reflective values.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, which aims to understand the subjective experiences of students in constructing the meaning of academic discipline through campus code of conduct practices. The phenomenological approach was chosen because it is in line with the research objective of exploring the meaning that lives in the consciousness and experiences of students, rather than simply measuring the level of compliance with rules. The research process was carried out in several stages, including: (1) primary data collection through in-depth interviews with students who actively participated in academic and campus organization activities; (2) participatory observation of student interactions in academic and non-academic campus environments; and (3) analysis of documents such as campus rules, academic regulations, and student activity records. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, with steps of data reduction, categorization, theme determination, and meaning interpretation. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation of sources

and methods, as well as member checking with informants to ensure the accuracy of the meanings produced.

The location of this study was AMIK Bukittinggi, a vocational college in West Sumatra that focuses on information management. The campus environment has fairly strict rules, especially in terms of attendance, dress code, use of technological facilities, and involvement in academic and non-academic activities. The research subjects consisted of 12 active students from various study programs and semesters, who were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in campus life and understanding of the rules and regulations. In addition to students, the study also involved two academic advisors and one student affairs staff member as additional informants to enrich the perspective on the implementation and meaning of discipline on campus. All data were collected over a period of three months through a series of interviews, direct observations in the campus environment, and documentation of academic activities, providing an in-depth picture of the construction of the meaning of academic discipline in the social and cultural context of AMIK Bukittinggi.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that the construction of academic discipline by AMIK Bukittinggi students is formed through dynamic interactions between formal campus rules, social values that exist within the academic community, and students' personal experiences in negotiating compliance with regulations. From the results of interviews and observations, three main themes emerged: (1) discipline as a form of academic responsibility, (2) discipline as the moral identity of educated students, and (3) discipline as a mechanism of social control and resistance. Students understand discipline not only as a regulatory obligation, but also as a means of building self-image and social legitimacy within the campus environment. These findings reinforce the idea that academic discipline is not merely compliance with rules, but rather the result of social construction that is internalized through daily practice (Rokhman et al., 2022).

The data shows that students' understanding of academic discipline is contextual. In social interactions on campus, students often interpret rules flexibly. For example, attendance rules are considered important for academic credibility, but dress codes are often interpreted more loosely as long as they do not disrupt the learning environment. This phenomenon reveals a dialectic between campus authority and student agency in shaping the meaning of discipline. Similar patterns are also found in research Dewi et al., (2021), which states that the implementation of

discipline through school rules is influenced by the institution's ability to internalize disciplinary values through exemplary behavior and effective communication.

The thematic analysis also found that academic discipline is interpreted as an adaptive strategy to the campus evaluation system. Many students associate discipline with academic success, such as grades, attendance, and scholarship opportunities. Discipline, in this context, becomes a “social currency” that determines academic success and professional image. These findings are in line with research by Hidayah et al., (2021), which shows that instilling discipline contributes significantly to increased motivation and academic achievement. On the other hand, some students show symbolic resistance to rules that are considered too formal or irrelevant to the vocational campus context. For example, the prohibition of using gadgets in class is seen as contrary to the characteristics of information technology education, which requires technological interaction. This shows that the meaning of discipline is not entirely homogeneous, but is produced through negotiations between institutional values and individual needs. A similar phenomenon is mentioned by Wulandari & Darwis, (2023), which found that an overly authoritarian disciplinary approach actually reduced student participation and motivation to learn.

The results of the observation also revealed that the relationship between lecturers and students plays an important role in shaping perceptions of discipline. Lecturers who apply a communicative and participatory approach in enforcing rules tend to be more successful in building discipline awareness based on responsibility rather than fear. This is in line with the positive discipline approach as found by Muthmainnah et al., (2024), that discipline, which fosters students' self-confidence and self-esteem, has a positive effect on learning at the university level. In the context of campus culture, discipline is also associated with the social ethics and religiosity of Minangkabau students, who emphasize the values of “shame” and “responsibility.” The integration of traditional and religious values reinforces the meaning of discipline as a form of self-control, as shown in the study ‘Urrahma & Nur’aeni, (2021), that self-control has a strong positive correlation with student discipline in Islamic educational institutions. To clarify the findings, the following table summarizes the main themes of the research results:

Tabel 1. Main Theme

Main Theme	Meaning Constructed by Students	Forms of Practice on Campus
Discipline as an academic responsibility	Discipline as a form of commitment to learning	Attend lectures on time, complete assignments
Discipline as a moral identity	Symbol of ethical and professional students	Respecting lecturers, dressing modestly

Discipline as a mechanism of control and resistance	Negotiations on rules deemed irrelevant	Adaptation to gadget bans, flexible attendance
---	---	--

The results of the study indicate a correlation between the construction of disciplinary meaning and campus organizational culture. Students who are active in student organizations have a more reflective awareness of discipline because they play a direct role in the implementation and socialization of rules and regulations. This shows that social participation strengthens the internalization of disciplinary values through collective experience. A similar approach was identified in the study Sayidah et al., (2019), which emphasizes the importance of participatory campus governance in improving the quality and compliance of students with the academic system.

The findings show that the construction of meaning of discipline at AMIK Bukittinggi moves from external compliance to internal awareness. This process occurs through collective experiences and personal reflections of students on the values of professionalism. Discipline is ultimately understood not as a form of restraint, but as a path to academic autonomy and professional ethics that will be carried into the world of work. These results confirm the relevance of the constructivist approach in understanding academic discipline as a dynamic, contextual, and culturally meaningful social phenomenon.

3.2. DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the meaning of academic discipline constructed by AMIK Bukittinggi students cannot be understood merely as compliance with rules and regulations, but rather as the result of a complex social process. Discipline in this context is a form of social meaning-making, namely how students interpret, adapt, and negotiate rules in their academic life. This is in line with the social constructionism theory proposed by Berger dan Luckmann (1966), that social reality, including discipline, is shaped through social interaction and language. These findings also support research Rokhman et al. (2022) which emphasizes that discipline is a manifestation of internalized values and beliefs, not merely an act of formal compliance.

The tendency of students to interpret discipline flexibly shows that campus rules are understood situationally and contextually. This reinforces the view that Foucault (1977) about discipline as a mechanism of power that is not only oppressive but also productive, creating subjects capable of negotiating meaning and adapting to their social structures. These findings are consistent with research Dewi et al., (2021), which found that the effectiveness of discipline implementation is highly dependent on the active involvement of students in understanding and internalizing these disciplinary values.

The results of the study reveal that students view discipline as a means of achieving academic and social success. This is in line with the theory of achievement motivation McClelland (1985), where disciplined behavior arises from the need to achieve and gain recognition. Research Hidayah et al., (2021) also found that instilling discipline increases learning motivation and a sense of responsibility for students' academic achievements. Thus, it can be concluded that discipline is not only an instrument of social control, but also symbolic capital for students to build academic credibility and professionalism in the future.

This study also found resistance to campus rules that were considered irrelevant to the vocational context. This resistance shows that students are not passive towards institutional power, but rather exercise interpretive agency by adapting norms to their practical needs. This phenomenon confirms the contradiction with authoritative disciplinary approaches as criticized by Wulandari & Darwis, (2023), which states that punishment-based discipline actually reduces student participation and self-confidence. Thus, this study supports a participatory approach to discipline that emphasizes dialogue and awareness rather than coercion. Interpersonal relationships between lecturers and students also play a significant role in shaping discipline awareness. Lecturers who use an empathetic and communicative approach have been proven to be more effective in fostering discipline awareness based on personal responsibility. These results are in line with research findings Muthmainnah et al., (2024) which shows that positive discipline increases students' self-esteem and motivation to learn. This means that effective academic discipline on campus must be built through social relationships that respect and empower students as active subjects.

In addition to interpersonal factors, cultural context also influences the construction of meaning of discipline. Minangkabau traditional values that emphasize the principles of shame and responsibility shape students' perceptions that discipline is a form of self-control that reflects personal honor. Research 'Urrahma & Nur'aeni, (2021) supports this finding, showing that self-control has a positive correlation with disciplined behavior in Islamic educational environments. Thus, discipline at AMIK Bukittinggi is not only the result of a formal regulatory system, but also a reflection of local cultural values that are internalized by students. From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches our understanding of discipline as a social and cultural construct in the context of higher education in Indonesia. The results confirm that discipline cannot be reduced to a set of rules, but is rather a product of the interaction between values, power, and academic identity. In practical terms, these findings have important implications for campus management, particularly in designing adaptive disciplinary policies that are vocational, participatory, and respectful of student autonomy. This approach is in line with the idea Sayidah et al., (2019) on the importance of inclusive university governance to strengthen academic discipline and quality.

This study confirms that the meaning of academic discipline at AMIK Bukittinggi is the result of a dynamic and layered social construction. Students are not merely objects of the disciplinary system, but also active actors who shape, negotiate, and interpret the meaning of discipline in accordance with their cultural and academic contexts. Theoretically, these findings expand our understanding of discipline from a sociological and educational perspective; practically, they provide a basis for the development of more humanistic campus policies based on students' awareness of their academic responsibilities.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the construction of academic discipline by AMIK Bukittinggi students is the result of a social process involving interactions between formal campus rules, local cultural values, and students' personal experiences in their academic life. Discipline is not only understood as a form of compliance with rules and regulations, but also as an expression of responsibility, moral identity, and adaptive strategies towards the higher education system. Students interpret discipline contextually and flexibly, adapting its meaning to learning situations and individual needs. In this process, they play an active role as subjects who are able to negotiate rules without losing their commitment to academic values and professionalism. Interpersonal relationships between lecturers and students, as well as a participatory campus social environment, have been shown to have a significant influence on the successful internalization of disciplinary values. The Minangkabau cultural context, which emphasizes the principles of responsibility and shame, reinforces the meaning of discipline as a form of self-control and personal honor. Thus, academic discipline at AMIK Bukittinggi is not a repressive system, but rather a social mechanism that enables students to develop self-awareness, integrity, and sustainable academic ethics. This research contributes to the understanding of discipline as a dynamic social construct, while in practical terms, the results can serve as a basis for the development of campus regulations that are more humanistic, contextual, and oriented towards the comprehensive character building of students.

5. REFERENCES

- 'Urrahma, M. D., & Nur'aeni, N. (2021). Self-Control and Disciplined Behavior Of Students. *Proceedings Series on Social Sciences & Humanities*, 2(SE-Articles), 75–78. <https://conferenceproceedings.ump.ac.id/pssh/article/view/106>
- Dewi, I. S., Hendracipta, N., & Syachruroji, A. (2021). The Implementation of Student Discipline Through School Rules. *IVCEJ*, 4(2), 48–53.
- Hidayah, R., Mu, E., & Zamhari, A. (2021). Learning Worship as a Way to Improve Students' Discipline, Motivation, and Achievement at School. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 8(3), 292–310. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/748>
- Jalaludin, D. M., Syah, M., Nursobah, A., & Suhartini, A. (2024). Academic Culture and Students' Scientific Attitudes In Improving The Quality of Higher Education: Research at the

- Indonesian Institute of Education and Garut University. *Jurnal Impresi Indonesia (JII)*, 3(8), 590–598. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jii.v3i8.5371>
- Muthmainnah, N., Bayu, F., & Manggala, A. (2024). Positive Discipline Impact on Students ' Self-Esteem in EFL Class in Tertiary Level. *IJIP: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Psychology*, 6(1), 80–96. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18326/ijip.v6i1.1817>
- Nasution, T. (2023). The Role of Citizenship Education in Raising Awareness of Complying with Campus Rules and Regulations at UIN North Sumatra Medan. *Jurnal Pendidikan IPS*, 13(2), 213–218.
- Pohan, R. A., Ramli, M., Atmoko, A., Negeri, U., Negeri, U., & Pohan, R. A. (2025). Construction of spiritual meaning in the transformation of gratitude for freshmen. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 81(1), 1–9.
- Purnomo, S., Wiyani, N. A., & Apriliani, I. (2025). Strengthening Student Discipline Behavior Through The Implementation of Principal Policies in Banyumas Indonesia. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*, 08(01), 261–268. <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v8-i01-32>
- Rokhman, R. A., In, A., & Habibi, I. (2022). Al-Fatihah-based discipline actualisation to shape the students ' character : Case study at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Model Bojonegoro , Indonesia. *AMCA Journal of Religion and Society*, 2(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.51773/ajrs.v2i1.148>
- Sayidah, N., Ady, S. U., Supriyati, J., Sutarmin, S., Winedar, M., Mulyaningtyas, A., & Assagaf, A. (2019). Quality and University Governance in Indonesia. *International Journal of Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v8n4p10>
- Sinabutar, O., Munthe, H. M., Siregar, R. T., Rizabuana, & Sitorus, H. (2023). Moral and Ethical Education For Student at the University of Quality Medan. *TECHNIUM: Social Sciences Journal*, 44, 977–984.
- Wabiser, Y. D., & Irianto, P. (2024). Problematics of Students' Discipline Value in Academic Activities and Non Academic. *Formosa Journal of Science and Technology*, 3(2), 355–366. <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjst.v3i2.8241>
- Wulandari, B., & Darwis, U. (2023). Analysis of the Low Level of Discipline of Class V Students at SD Negeri 064961 Medan Maimun District. *International Journal of Educational Research Excellence (IJERE)*, 02(02), 204–210. <https://doi.org/10.55299/serve.v2i2.465>