Effectiveness of Group Counseling Services Using Self-Instruction Techniques to Reduce Students Academic Procrastination in Grade XI at SMAN 7 Kediri

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Abstract

High levels of academic procrastination among students need to be addressed to ensure the effectiveness of group counseling services. A reduction in procrastination is reflected in more active participation during learning, improved planning and time management, as well as better quality of assignments and academic outcomes. This research aimed to reduce academic procrastination by applying group counseling methods combined with self-instruction techniques. The study employed an experimental approach within the framework of action research in guidance and counseling. Participants consisted of four students identified as having high levels of academic procrastination. Data were collected using self-evaluation questionnaires and analyzed both descriptively and comparatively. The findings revealed notable differences between the pre-cycle, first cycle, and second cycle. Initial (pre-test) results indicated that students' procrastination scores fell within the high to very high categories (54, 53, 57, 62). By the second cycle, these scores had decreased to the very low category (18, 18, 16, 21). This demonstrates a substantial reduction in academic procrastination following the intervention. However, as the study involved only four participants, the results may not fully represent the broader student population. It is hoped that these findings will encourage students to become more aware of their own study habits. Guidance and counseling teachers are encouraged to design engaging and relevant services that foster a comfortable environment for students to share their experiences. Future research should consider involving more diverse participants and exploring alternative techniques or approaches that might be even more effective in addressing academic procrastination. The use of group counseling with self-instruction techniques has shown promise in helping students manage and reduce academic procrastination.

Keywords: Group Counseling; Self-Instruction; Academic Procrastination.

Introduction

Adolescence is a period marked by puberty and is often characterized by instability or difficulty in making decisions about one's own life. Special attention is crucial during this stage, as it is a highly dynamic phase of development that can determine a person's life trajectory (Sijabat, 2021). As a result, adolescents often engage in impulsive behaviors, such as postponing academic assignments in favor of more enjoyable activities. Therefore, support from both family and the educational environment is essential during adolescence. Education plays a vital role in shaping a quality future for adolescents and serves as the primary means to optimize each individual's potential. According to Tilaar (2019), effective education must foster awareness and readiness in students to face various challenges, both academically and socially. However, students frequently encounter obstacles that hinder their efforts to maintain positive learning behaviors. One of the most common challenges is procrastination, which refers to the tendency to delay schoolwork—often known as academic procrastination.

Procrastination is often linked to anxiety and fear of failure. It is considered a barrier to academic success because it can reduce both the quality and quantity of learning, increase stress levels, and negatively impact one's life (Muyana, 2018). Procrastination involves postponing actions or delaying tasks until a later time. This behavior manifests as putting off starting or completing work and intentionally engaging in other unnecessary activities (Sandra, 2013). Academic procrastination specifically refers to the tendency to delay starting or completing essential academic tasks, even when aware of the negative consequences (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). The impacts of academic procrastination include feelings of worry, disappointment in oneself, confusion, wasting time, regret, sadness, mental burden, and loss of motivation (Ahmad, 2021). Procrastination also has negative emotional effects, such as increased anxiety and stress (Triyono & Khairi, 2018). The consequences of academic procrastination can be seen in missed assignment deadlines, poor writing skills, lower grades, and inadequate preparation for exams (Abdillah & Fitriana, 2021).

Based on the results of a previously implemented classical guidance session with the theme "Procrastination and How to Overcome It," it was found that some students still exhibited high levels of academic procrastination. This was revealed through service evaluations, which showed that four students were identified as having high levels of academic procrastination. After the pre-test, these students scored 54, 53, 57, and 62, which fall into the high and very high categories. Although classical guidance services have provided an understanding of the negative impacts of procrastination and strategies to overcome it, some students still experience difficulties in applying these strategies in their daily lives. This finding indicates the need for more intensive and sustainable efforts to help students overcome academic procrastination more effectively.

Given this phenomenon, guidance and counseling in schools are needed to address academic procrastination. As Muslihati (2019) points out, guidance and counseling have three main functions: preventive, developmental, and curative. Through its curative function, academic procrastination can be addressed more effectively. Several intervention techniques have been used to reduce academic procrastination, including discovery learning (Ramadhani & Sari, 2018), cognitive restructuring (Erfantinni et al., 2016), and self-instruction techniques (Saputra & Lidyawati, 2019). This study employs the self-instruction technique developed by Meichenbaum (Corey, 2012). The self-instruction technique aims to reshape negative beliefs, judgments, and tendencies toward self-blame (Ahmad & Oktaviani, 2019). Self-instruction teaches students to talk to themselves using positive and encouraging phrases, especially when they feel the urge to procrastinate. For example, instead of saying, "I'll do it later," students are encouraged to say, "I can start now, just take it step by step." In this way, they become more motivated to take immediate action. This technique is suitable for high school students, as they are beginning to think more maturely, need to learn independence, and are easily influenced by their own thoughts.

Self-instruction can be implemented through group counseling. According to Latipun (2006), group counseling utilizes group settings to provide support, feedback, and learning experiences for its members. The application of group counseling services using self-instruction techniques is expected to be an effective strategy for reducing students'

academic procrastination. This approach aims to help students change their mindsets and procrastination behaviors by building positive thinking habits and constructive self-instruction.

Methodology

The research approach used in this study is action research, which can be simply defined as a form of research that investigates an action that has been carried out according to a predetermined design. In educational settings, action research is described as a systematic inquiry conducted to gather information about various practices in learning (McNiff, 1991). In the context of guidance and counseling, guidance and counseling action research (PTBK) is conducted by BK teachers/counselors through basic or responsive services, with the aim of improving their performance so that clients experience positive behavioral changes in their learning outcomes (Setiawan, 2018).
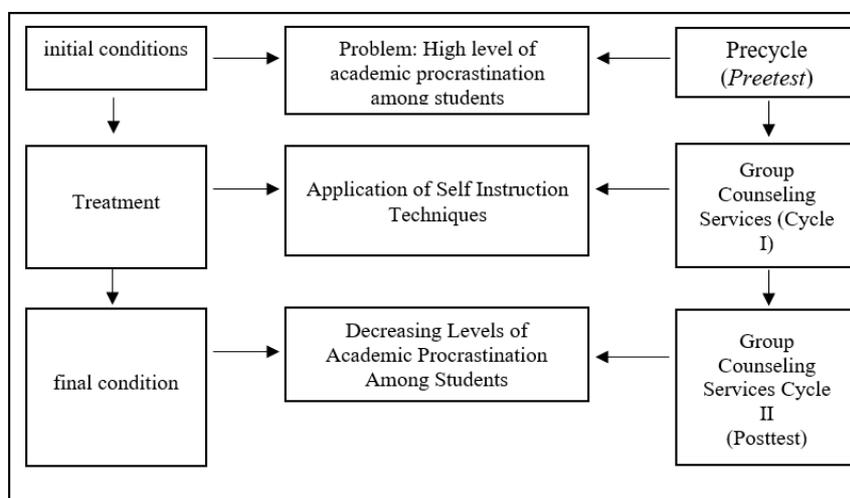

Figure 1. Research Cycle

The design of this counseling action research adopts Kurt Lewin's action research model, which consists of four stages: Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting (Ishak, 2021). In the planning stage, a Guidance and Counseling Service Implementation Plan (RPLBK) is prepared. The action stage involves implementing the planned group counseling services in accordance with the previously prepared RPLBK. During the observation stage, observations are made throughout the group service process using self-instruction techniques. In the reflection stage, data analysis is carried out based on the results of the actions undertaken. This research was conducted in two cycles, each comprising the same stages and the implementation of identical action strategies. The research subjects were four students from class XI-6 at SMA N 7 Kediri. The subjects were selected purposively because they possessed characteristics that aligned with the focus of the research problem. Although the number of subjects was small, this is in accordance with the characteristics of guidance and counseling action research, which emphasizes a deeper understanding of individual behavior change processes. This study does not aim for statistical generalization, but rather is contextual, so the results can serve as a reference for handling similar cases in other contexts with similar characteristics. The research was carried out over 16 days, from February 4 to February 20, 2025. The data collection procedure utilized one instrument developed as a data collection tool. Documentation was also used as supplementary data during the activity. The data analysis technique employed in this study was descriptive and comparative. The data obtained were described realistically and in detail. Initial data from the pre-cycle (before the action) were compared with data after the action (Cycle II) to observe the differences.

Results and Discussion

Results
Pre-cycle Results
Pre-cycle activities were conducted to determine the students' levels of academic procrastination. The pre-cycle took place during the first group counseling meeting.

Table 1. Pre-cycle Results

No	Respondent	Score	Category
1	SA	54	High
2	VI	53	High
3	PI	57	High
4	SS	62	Very High

The results obtained from the pre-cycle activities show that the level of procrastination experienced by the group members falls into two categories: very high and high.

Results of Cycle I
In Cycle I, the researcher found that communication within the group was not yet effective. This was indicated by only one or two group members actively speaking and expressing their opinions, while the other members tended to be passive. Furthermore, during the implementation of the actions in this cycle, the researcher also encountered several obstacles, one of which was the clients' lack of openness in sharing their stories. This condition made it difficult for the researcher and other group members to understand the problems faced by the clients. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of Cycle I was not optimal and still requires improvement, particularly in the aspects of group communication and client openness.

Results of Cycle II
After evaluating and analyzing the results of Cycle I, the researchers planned follow-up steps by implementing Cycle II. This action aimed to address the deficiencies identified in the previous cycle and increase the effectiveness of the activities. In Cycle II, a post-test was also conducted to determine the changes that occurred and the extent to which the planned objectives had been achieved.

Table 2. Results of Cycle II

No	Respondent	Score	Category
1	SA	18	Very Low
2	VI	18	Very Low
3	PI	16	Very Low
4	SS	21	Very Low

The success of the actions in Cycle II was demonstrated by the changes observed in the students (group members) compared to Cycle I during the group counseling service activities using self-instruction techniques. From the post-test results, it was found that group members who initially had high and very high levels of procrastination shifted to the very low category. This forms the basis for the conclusion that the implementation of group counseling using self-instruction techniques has proven effective in reducing students' levels of academic procrastination.

Discussion
Based on the results of observations, post-test data, and reflections during the research activities, it was found that there was a decrease in the level of academic procrastination among group members after participating in group counseling services using self-instruction techniques. The researchers conducted pre-cycle activities and two cycles of group counseling using self-instruction strategies. Pre-cycle activities were used to assess the level of

procrastination of group members before any intervention was given. Throughout the process, the researchers reflected on the results of the pre-cycle activities to determine the most effective strategies to use.

In Cycle I, the researcher focused on laziness and mood disorders, which are aspects of academic procrastination. In this session, group members were invited to identify the causes behind their laziness, such as a lack of clear learning goals, fatigue, or habitual procrastination. Additionally, the topic of mood disorders was discussed, as unstable emotional conditions—such as anxiety, sadness, or lack of motivation—often cause students to lose enthusiasm for learning. During the activity, not all group members actively participated; only one or two members expressed opinions and contributed ideas. It was also apparent that group members were not yet fully open about the problems they were experiencing. Therefore, at the beginning of Cycle II, it was necessary to create a safe and comfortable atmosphere and build open communication through a warm and non-judgmental approach so that group members would feel more confident in sharing their stories and could be more open about their problems.

In Cycle II, the researchers focused on discussing self-doubt and poor time management, which are also aspects of academic procrastination, while still addressing the issues of laziness and mood disorders from Cycle I. In this cycle, a significant improvement in group dynamics was observed. Group members appeared more active in expressing their opinions, more open in sharing personal problems, and began to understand the aspects of procrastination they most frequently experienced. This occurred because the group atmosphere had started to develop well, with each member feeling more comfortable and confident in speaking up. Furthermore, the approach used was a relaxed but focused discussion method, along with the use of reflective questions that helped them recognize their procrastination habits. Support from group members who listened to each other without judgment also helped create a safe environment for students to open up, making group members more comfortable sharing their problems.
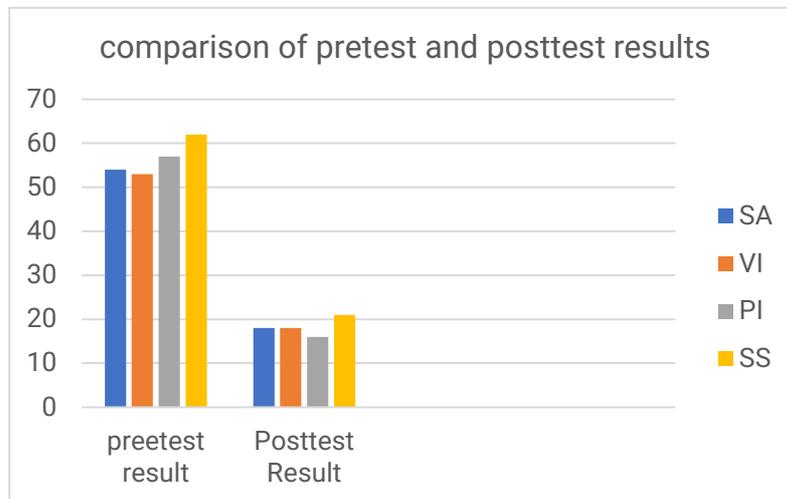

Figure 2. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Graphs

Based on the graph shown above, it can be concluded that there was a significant decrease in students' levels of academic procrastination. Initially, procrastination levels were in the high and very high categories, but after group counseling services using self-instruction techniques, the scores decreased to the very low category. These results indicate that implementing group counseling with self-instruction techniques has proven effective in helping group members overcome the habit of procrastination. This technique encourages students to form positive internal dialogues, directs their thoughts toward more productive actions, and helps them recognize and manage factors that trigger procrastination. The success of this intervention is also inseparable from the active participation of group members during the counseling process, a conducive group atmosphere, and the application of appropriate approaches by the counselor. Furthermore, the effectiveness of self-instruction techniques in reducing students' academic procrastination is also strongly influenced by parental support and the home learning environment. Support

in the form of reminders, motivation, and a conducive learning environment can reinforce changes in student behavior. Conversely, a less supportive home environment can hinder the optimal implementation of these techniques.

Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion regarding the effectiveness of group counseling services using self-instruction techniques to reduce students' academic procrastination levels, it can be concluded that there were significant differences between the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II. The results of this study indicate that group counseling services using self-instruction techniques have proven effective in reducing students' academic procrastination behavior. This technique helps students develop a more positive mindset, directs them to be more focused on their tasks, and enables them to manage the urge to procrastinate. Therefore, group counseling services using self-instruction techniques can be regarded as an appropriate alternative counseling strategy to help students overcome the habit of procrastinating on academic tasks. As a follow-up to this research, several suggestions are worth considering. For students, it is important to start recognizing their own study habits, especially those related to procrastination. Learning positive self-talk, such as giving oneself encouragement or reminders to stay focused on goals, can also be helpful. Guidance and counseling teachers are expected to design services that are engaging, relevant, and make students feel comfortable sharing their experiences, so that the counseling process can be more effective. For future researchers, it would be beneficial to involve more participants from diverse backgrounds to ensure more representative results, and to try other techniques or approaches that may be more effective in addressing academic procrastination. The school is expected to support the implementation of self-instruction techniques more broadly through integration into guidance and counseling services, particularly for students experiencing academic procrastination. Furthermore, educational management needs to provide training and policies that support the development of similar intervention programs so they can be implemented sustainably and comprehensively in school settings. Future researchers can also explore other relevant counseling techniques, or combine self-instruction techniques with other approaches to determine which is more effective in overcoming academic procrastination.

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