Self-Instruction Group Counselling Technique to Reduce Students Academic

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Article Info

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the impact of self-instruction group counseling technique on students' academic procrastination behavior. To achieve such objective, one-group pretest - posttest design was used in this study by involving 8 students as participants. The results of paired t-test showed that the students' academic procrastination level decreased higher in the posttest measurement (71.39%) than pretest (80.21%, t = 14.982, p < 0.01). Moreover, this study further discussed the possibility of applying self-instruction in overcoming students' academic procrastination behavior problem at State Junior High School (SMP Negeri) 11 Surakarta.

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INTRODUCTION

Procrastination is a bad habit that is hard to avoid, most people have happened to do procrastination in their lives and been able to complete their tasks and work in time. However, for some individuals, continuous procrastination will create a behavior that will have negative consequences (Stead, et al. 2010). In an academic environment, the delays made by students related to their academic tasks are called academic procrastination. Ackerman and Gross (in Jiao, et al. 2011) describe academic procrastination as a special form of delay occurring in an academic setting. Also, Jhonson (in Van Wyk, 2004) argues that procrastination has become a deeply rooted habit in society. The increase of such behavior also occurs in students who do academic procrastination in completing their duties. This is evidenced by research conducted Van Wyk (2004) which discovered that as many as 15% of the population tend to do procrastination and as much as 1% of the population often do procrastination.

The research conducted by Setyaningtyas (2009) found that some junior high school students, in almost every morning do homework at school. Regarding to this academic procrastination, the degree of students' academic procrastination is different in regions, Munawaroh, et al. (2017) proved that in Jogjakarta study there were 17.2% of junior high school students having high procrastination, 77.1% fair and 5.7% low. Alternatively, in academic procrastination, students who often do so will continue to wish to postpone their academic obligations widely and permanently. It causes them to spend more than 30% of daily activities in procrastination behavior such as sleeping during the day, playing, or watching TV (Pychyl, et al. 2012).

The behavior of academic procrastination in students will have an impact on academic achievement in schools, according to Zahra & Neti's research (2015), the level of academic procrastination has a role in declining academic achievement. Further, Jiao, et al. (2011) state that the group with the lowest achievement levels tend to be the students who most often procrastinate while performing academic tasks. Their academic procrastination will make them difficult to reach achievements. This happens because they see that academic tasks burden some, less able to manage time, too engrossed to play with friends and play smartphone, so the result is delay.

Ferrari, et al. (1995) describes factors affecting academic procrastination are irrational beliefs and perfectionism. In addition, academic procrastination arises because the offender needs the help of others in doing the task, feeling lazy, difficulty managing time, and not liking the task (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Meanwhile, students' academic procrastination behavior arises because of irrational thinking about academic tasks. They assume that the task can be done tomorrow because the time is still long so they choose to have fun and postpone it. Ferrari (2010) says that as a behavioral delay, academic procrastination can be manifested in certain indicators that can be measured and observed, these characteristics are: (1) Perceived time, someone who tends to procrastinate is people who fail to keep deadlines, (2) Intention-action, a gap between desire and action, (3) Emotional distress, the existence of anxiety during procrastination, and (4) Perceived ability, or belief in self-ability. These indicators somehow trigger students to think irrationally about the tasks they receive.

From the Cognitive-Behavioral perspective, Ellis and Knaus (in Tuckman, 2002) provide an explanation of academic procrastination, in which academic procrastination occurs because of the irrational beliefs that individuals possess. Such irrational beliefs can be caused by a mistake in perceiving schoolwork (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Therefore, to address the gap, this study discussed possible interventions to reduce the behavior of academic procrastination.

Self-instruction group counselling technique is a form of intervention provided to students who had high academic procrastination behavior. Moreover, this is a technique adapted from modification of the cognitive-behavioral counseling approach (Baker & James, 1984). It

involves identifying dysfunctional beliefs that belong to a person and transforming them into a more realistic, and involving behavioral modification techniques (Bos, et al. 2006). In this stage, any negative beliefs in the individual are gradually changed through the instructions given to oneself in order to motivate themselves to think rationally. Also, Furniss & McGuire (2000) explains that self-instruction is a training technique done through the use of statements or self-instruction by converting irrational thinking into rational thinking.

Furnis & McGuire (2000) explain that self-instruction technique can be used to reduce the level of negative behavior and promote the selected behavior. Associated with the behavior of academic procrastination, the provision of self-instruction will encourage students to convince themselves using self-statement to be able to control thinking and provide motivation in doing and completing academic tasks in school.

Saputra, Purwanto, & Awalya (2017) in their research explain that self-instruction and cognitive restructuring group counselling techniques effectively reduce students' academic procrastination behavior. Accordingly, self-instruction training has also been shown to be effective in improving the performance of children in completing schoolwork (Douglas, Parry, Marton, & Garson, 1976; Kendall & Finch, 1978; Meichenbaum & Goodman, 1971; Palkes, Stewart & Freedman, 1972; Palkes, Stewart, & Kahana, 1968; Robin, Armel, & O'Leary, 1975 in Bryant & Budd, 1982). Again, Fatimah & Setiawati (2013) in their research, used self-instruction technique to handle students' off-task behavior. The results showed that the technique of self-instruction is effective to reduce the student's off-task behavior.

Meichenbaum & Goodman (in Mennuti, et al. 2006) explain that the main focus of self-instruction is to train individuals to make self-assertions when confronted with problem situations in an attempt to encourage and strengthen self-control skills. In relation to the previously mentioned explanation, the objective to achieve in this studywas to know the level of effectiveness of intervention given through self-

instruction group counseling technique to condition. It was done by condition students to be able to instruct themselves through the change of irrational mindset into the rational mindset made by the students themselves. This change of mindset led students to cognate and feel (affective) in determining some internal dialogue that will be manifested into new behaviors to accomplish academic tasks.

METHODS

The method used in this study was by applying one-group pretest-posttest design involving one experimental group consisting of junior high school students. This design was started by giving pretest followed by the implementation of intervention, namely self-instruction group counselling technique in eight meetings (1 x 60 minutes), and the last was posttest. In the implementation of these stage, the researchers did purposive sampling to choose research subjects, namely the eight grade of Junior High School with high criterion of academic procrastination. Further, eight students were chosen, consisting on two female students and six male students. They were assessed by using academic procrastination scale covering eight indicators. This scale was validated and resulted that there were 36 items of students' academic procrastination instrument were valid (r_{xy} = 0.376-0.631). Meanwhile, the alpha coefficient of this instrument was 0.917.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collection from the field, subjects' data were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of intervention. The level of effectiveness was determined by changes in academic procrastination behavior by looking at the comparison of pretest and posttest scores. Additionally, the pretest data of the subjects of academic procrastination research resulted in high category 8.79%, medium 64.84%, low 26.37%, and very low 0.00%. Based on these data, the students with high category (8 people) taken into the subject of research had the average

score of pretest 80.21%. Subsequently, the subjects were given self-instruction group counseling intervention for eight meetings with a duration of 1 x 60 minutes.

The intervention provided was structured in accordance with the plan that has been made. For more, at the end of the meeting the subjects were given a posttest to find out the final result after being given the intervention of self-

instruction group counselling technique. Apparently, the results of posttest obtained by subject has decreased with the average score of 71.39% and entered in medium category. This showed that there was a decrease in the level of academic procrastination behavior of students before and after being given the intervention of self-instruction group counselling technique.

Table 1. The Comparison of Students' Procrastination Behavior Levels Before and After Received Intervention

Respondent codes	Pretest			Posttest			Score differences
	Total scores	%	Category	Total scores	%	Category	
R-1	143	79.44	High	131	72.78	Medium	18
R-2	145	80.56	High	126	70.00	Medium	21
R-3	142	78.89	High	122	67.78	Medium	22
R-4	144	80.00	High	125	69.44	Medium	21
R-5	144	80.00	High	130	72.22	Medium	14
R-6	144	80.00	High	130	72.22	Medium	14
R-7	147	81.67	High	132	73.33	Medium	15
R-8	146	81.11	High	132	73.33	Medium	14
Average	144.37	80.21	High	128.5	71.39	Medium	15.87

The results of the effectiveness test of the group counseling model that has been tested can be seen on table 1. The comparison of the calculation of pretest and posttest scores on the scale of academic procrastination. Meanwhile, the paired sample t test conducted on the pretest and posttest data showed that the results of the students' academic procrastination at the time of posttest implementation (M = 128.50, SD = 3.703) was significantly lower than the pretest result (M = 144.38, SD = 1.598; $t_{(7)}$ = 14.98, p = 0.000 < 0.01). This finding was in line with the prediction of the first hypothesis that self-instruction group counselling technique is effective in reducing the academic procrastination behavior of SMP Negeri 11 Surakarta students.

Table 2. The Effectiveness Results of Self-Instruction Group Counselling Technique to Reduce Student's Academic Procrastination

	M	SD	$t_{(7)}$	P
Pretest	144.38	1.598	14.982	< 0.01
Posttest	128.50	3.703		

Based on table 2 on the results of paired sample t test, it can be seen that there were significant changes in the pretest and posttest results of the entire subjects who followed the

intervention of self-instruction group counselling technique in reducing academic procrastination. Further, there was a discussion on the effectiveness on each indicator of students' academic procrastination according to pretest and posttest results. As showed in Table 3, the effectiveness level of each indicator of academic procrastination between pretest and posttest values was displayed. It showed that there were significant differences in the indicator of estimation in determining the time to do tasks, gap between the plan and the real action in doing tasks, attitude and belief in tasks, feelings when doing procrastination, and the feelings of failure in doing tasks. These five indicators had an impact on the change of feelings and awareness of academic tasks. They made a rational change of mindset in accepting academic tasks. On the one hand, on the indicator of timeliness required to complete tasks, obstacles experienced while doing tasks, and ability to do tasks in various situations and conditions had not significantly impacted the behavior of procrastination.

Based on the results of research that has been done, it was known that the subjects who followed self-instruction group counselling technique managed to reduce the level of academic procrastination behavior.

Table 3. The Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Results on Each Indicator of Academic Procrastination

Indicators	Pretest		Posttest		$t_{(7)}$	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Estimation in determining the time to do tasks	19.63	0.916	16.88	1.126	4.660	< 0.01
Timeliness required to complete tasks	11.63	0.518	11.25	1.488	0.629	> 0.05
Gap between the plan and the real action in doing tasks	24.38	1.506	20.00	1.309	5.320	< 0.01
Obstacles experienced while doing tasks	11.63	1.188	10.38	0.518	2.118	> 0.05
Attitude and belief in tasks	21.75	1.669	18.38	0.744	5.974	< 0.01
Feelings when doing procrastination	23.75	1.488	22.38	1.598	2.582	< 0.05
Ability to do tasks in various situations and conditions	19.38	1.061	18.00	2.000	2.308	> 0.05
The feelings of failure in doing tasks	12.25	1.035	10.88	0.641	4.245	< 0.01

It was resulted by their effort to follow all the steps in the self-instruction group counseling service from storming, norming, information gathering, conceptualizing to the problem, and homework. Such a series of steps increased the knowledge of academic procrastination as well as the understanding of group members in assessing themselves to overcome academic procrastination behavior. Through self-instruction group counseling interventions, group members were asked to be able to change the irrational mindset to be rational in perceiving the academic tasks they received with cognitive intervention in the form of self-instruction and actualized all their abilities to realize the instruction. This matched the results of research conducted by Ozer, Demir & Ferrari (2013) who conducted research on short-term group treatment programs using cognitive interventions that focused on student procrastination. During group sessions, participants identified their irrational thoughts as well as cognitive distortions associated with the tendency of academic procrastination. Self-instruction is a form of self-talk used to remind students how to proceed and what to emphasize in performing their tasks (Mennuti, et al. 2006). In this study, the subjects were expected to realize how important all the activities of the intervention so as to motivate in reducing the behavior of procrastination by instructing themselves to immediately do and complete the task. In the implementation of group counseling, the subjects were directed in determining the selected instructions to be manifested into behavior change. This was reinforced by Miltenberger's explanation (2008) that students can also be guided through complex tasks in the form of self-generated oral commands. The instruction was a sentence spoken from within to direct, mobilized itself through the cognitive realm that is immediately manifested in behavior to accomplish the accepted task.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of self-instruction group counseling technique on the behavior of academic procrastination of junior high school students. The results of the test showed that self-instruction group counselling technique has a positive impact on changes in students' academic procrastination behavior. In addition, each aspect of academic procrastination is also found a significant change. There are five indicators that produce significant results that impact on the change of rational mindset of academic tasks that affect the awareness of the subject on the importance of academic tasks, while the other three indicators have not had an impact on changes in behavior of academic procrastination significantly. Overall self-instruction group counselling technique interventionis effective for reducing students' academic procrastination behavior. Therefore, the next study is expected to provide a second follow-up to focus on changes in students' academic procrastination behavior. It is also important to advise school counselors to apply to students who have problems with academic procrastination.

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