

Group Counseling with Cognitive Therapy Group and Extinction Techniques to Reduce Academic Procrastination

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Abstract

Studies related to the use of cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques have happened to be ineffective to reduce academic procrastination, so this study aimed at proofing that the use of group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques was effective to reduce academic procrastination. To do so, the researchers employed Randomized Pre-test – Post-test Comparison Group Design. This design was applied to 14 people chosen randomly based on the pre-test results using academic procrastination scale. These people were divided into two groups. Based on the results of Wilcoxon test, it was known that cognitive therapy group technique was effective to reduce academic procrastination ($Z = -2.37$; $p < 0.05$). Similarly, extinction technique was also effective to reduce academic procrastination ($Z = -2.36$; $p < 0.05$). In details, extinction technique was more effective than cognitive therapy group in reducing academic procrastination ($Z = -5.13$; $p < 0.05$). Thus, these findings contribute implications for counselors. First, the counselors are suggested to use cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques to reduce academic procrastination. Second, the counselors should pay more attention on the processes of group counseling during the implementation.

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INTRODUCTION

Procrastination can be defined as a habit of continuously postponing activities or important tasks, and as a tendency to finish the tasks at another time (Knaus, 2010). In addition, LaForge (2005) argues that academic procrastination means the act of postponing to begin or to finish important tasks. Later on, this habit will cause lateness, and psychological disorders in form of guilt, stress, and frustration. This kind of procrastination is a failure in accomplishing academic tasks realized by having no expectation to complete the task at a particular time, lacks of goals and no optimum efforts in doing the tasks. These situation has a risk of maladaptive potentials for the actors (Erfantinni, I.H., et al, 2016).

Students who have high procrastination prefer to postpone their academic tasks, such as doing homework, preparing for exams or working on paper assignments near the deadlines (Balkis, M., Duru, E., & Bulus, M 2009). The procrastination they experience urge to be stopped. When students are not success against this issue, their daily life will get disrupted, and be not optimal when learning (Rosmayati, Sunawan & Sinta, S., 2017)

Apparently, academic procrastination was still found in one of Vocational High Schools in Semarang City. The preliminary study showed that there found high academic procrastination, namely 70% based on the distribution of academic procrastination questionnaire, and field observation. The results were proved by the facts that in every day there were many students did their homework in classroom, did not bring their assignment with the reasons of being left behind or forget. Unfortunately, the high procrastination which belongs to the dimension cognitive, emotional dimension/ affective, and wrong behaviors causes the students at different intervals in the delay cycle (Glick, D. M., Millstein, D. J., & Orsillo, S. M. 2014).

The high level of academic procrastination will inhibit students to develop given its serious impacts. One alternative to deal with academic procrastination is to implement group counseling

with cognitive therapy groups and extinction techniques. Both techniques belong to CBT approach that is more effective to reduce academic procrastination (Toker, 2015).

Cognitive therapy groups and extinction techniques are able to stop mindset stimuli which causes academic procrastination (Wilding & Milne, 2013). The assumption of using cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques were based on several findings that proved both techniques effective to reduce academic procrastination. The example is a study by Alexander (2017) which concludes that the implementation of CBT group is able to solve problems related to procrastination, anxiety, and depression until the effects got reduction. However, a study by Beattie, Sarah., & Beattie, D. (2018) shows that Cognitive Therapy Groups in CBT approach is less effective to solve long term procrastination jointly.

Raudatul's study (2016) reveals that extinction technique is effective to solve academic procrastination. Oppositely, Silfia's study (2016) states that extinction technique has no effect in reducing academic procrastination (proved by the facts that students still procrastinate and do their homework outside classroom).

To respond the aforementioned findings of the previous studies, this study was directed to clarify the effectiveness of group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques to reduce academic procrastination. It was hoped that the findings of this study contributed a theory regarding the basis of academic procrastination reduction for students by implementing group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques.

METHODS

This study used randomized pre-test post-test comparison group design by giving two interventions, namely group intervention of cognitive therapy group technique, and extinction techniques. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 14 subjects from 129 students of Muhammadiyah Vocational

High School or SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang. Moreover, each group consisted of seven members whose academic procrastination was high.

The data of this study were collected using academic procrastination scale made by the researchers. This scale consists of 34 valid items with four indicators, and five scaling levels. Based on reliability test, it was known that this scale had alpha Cronbach of 0.66.

The intervention processes of cognitive therapy group technique was started by conducting initial interview with the group members. Then, the counselees were asked to do evaluation in group by telling the evaluation in a strict, loud and open manner, while other members gave responses. Besides responding, the group members also stimulated one another. This kind of stimulus was used as feedbacks for each member, and realized by providing cognitive change of mindset to reduce academic procrastination.

For extinction technique, the intervention for the group members was focused on providing stimulus for giving deterrent effects to the students. It was done by collaborating with teachers whose subjects give a lot of homework to do, and giving reinforcement for students to finish them before the due date.

The data analysis in this study used Wilcoxon and Mann-Whitney tests with help of SPSS 24. The Wilcoxon test aimed at determining the effectiveness and the amount of effects resulted by the group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques. Meanwhile, Mann-Whitney test was used to determine the differences between two experimental groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data description in this study showed that both groups experienced reduction proved by the values of mean and standard deviation. The cognitive group therapy experimental group in the pre-test gained ($M = 145.43$; $SD = 1.71$), and the post-test gained ($M = 115.71$; $SD = 12.41$). On the other hand, the experimental group with

the extinction technique gained pre-test results of ($M = 144.86$; $SD = 2.79$), and post-test ($M = 113.86$; $SD = 11.58$)

Data analysis was performed using Wilcoxon test. This technique was used to examine the effectiveness of cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques in reducing academic procrastination. It resulted the cognitive therapy group was able to reduce academic procrastination ($Z = -2.37$; $p < 0.05$), while the extinction technique was also effective in reducing academic procrastination ($Z = -2.36$; $p < 0.05$).

Furthermore, data analysis using Mann-Whitney was carried out to examine the differences in the level of effectiveness of cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques in reducing academic procrastination. It showed that there were some differences in the way both techniques reduced the procrastination ($Z = -5.13$; $p < 0.05$). The results of the complete data analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Results of Mean, SD, Wilcoxon, and Mann-Whitney Analyses

Technique		Pre-test	Post-test	Z_1
Cognitive therapy group	M	145.43	115.71	-2.37
	SD	1.71	12.41	
Extinction	M	144.86	113.86	-2.36
	SD	2.79	11.58	
Z_2		-8.40	-5.33	
p		0.04	0.01	

The above results showed that there were differences in the reduction of academic procrastination made by both techniques. When compared to cognitive therapy group technique, the reduction made by extinction technique was higher than cognitive therapy group technique.

The results are in line with Aryani Esty's study findings (2014) that group counseling with cognitive behavior therapy is able to reduce academic procrastination. Another study done by Rozental, et. al. (2015) also proves that cognitive behavior therapy technique is effective to deal with academic procrastination. In addition, Sundari's study (2017) regarding the implementation of extinction technique shows that this technique enables the reduction in academic procrastination. Next, Raudhatul's

study (2016) mentions that individual counseling using extinction technique done for the seventh grade students of Islamic Junior High School/ Mts in Bandar Lampung contributes effective results in reducing academic procrastination.

Cognitive therapy groups and extinction techniques could stop mindset stimulus which plays a role as the basis of academic procrastination. Some general interventions such as automatic thought records, disputing beliefs, monitoring moods, developing a hierarchy of desire, monitoring activities, problem solving, Socrates questions, relaxation methods, risk assessments, and relapse prevention require appropriate handling based on cognitive aspects, elimination and behavior. (Corey, 2012).

The implementation of the group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques was done based on the procedures of each technique so that students' academic procrastination could be solved properly. The results were students' academic procrastination got reduced, and were able to do their tasks with no procrastination.

The findings of this study provided some implications for counselors. First, to reduce academic procrastination, counselors can use cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques in group counseling services. Second, things to concern in the implementation of this counseling are maximum mastery of the overall stages, given the importance of adjusting the intervention based on the objectives of the group counseling.

According to the previous discussion, it was known that the study findings proved the group counseling with cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques was effective to reduce academic procrastination. However, this study had some limitations. First, the results of this study have not been able to distinguish the level of academic procrastination experienced by male and female, including controlling gender effects. Second, this study has not yet combined cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques to reduce academic procrastination in the implementation of group counseling.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that group counseling with cognitive therapy group technique and extinction technique is effective in reducing academic procrastination. Hence, it is recommended to use group counseling with cognitive therapy group technique and extinction technique in reducing academic procrastination. Meanwhile, the future researchers are suggested to conduct studies at the level of academic procrastination experienced by male and female, and combine cognitive therapy group and extinction techniques in group counseling with the aim of reducing academic procrastination. At last, the future studies are expected to provide different interventions.

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