

The Effectiveness of Behavioral Group Counseling with Self-Management and Token Economy Techniques to Reduce Academic Procrastination

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Abstract

Academic procrastination has negative impact on the decline in students' academic achievement. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of behavioral group counseling with self-management and token economy techniques to reduce the academic procrastination of students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang. It was an experimental study which used randomized pretest-posttest comparison group design and involved 14 grade eleven students chosen purposively of 429 people. The subjects were then grouped into two, namely one group received a self-management technique, and another one received a token economy technique for 4 sessions for each. Findings showed that both techniques were effective to reduce the academic procrastination of the students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang, while each technique contributed equal impact. The interesting thing from the results of this study was that attention disorder became the most influential aspect in shaping academic procrastination in students.

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INTRODUCTION

Students are supposed to complete their academic assignments because those are their responsibility. If it is done, the learning can be said ideal. It can also become a benchmark for students' achievement at school. (He, 2017) explains motivation to complete assignments prevent possible unbeneficial effects for students' academic achievement. (Khan et.al, 2014) add if students' learning motivation is good, their success will result the same.

Procrastination related to school tasks is called as academic procrastination. (McCloskey, 2011) defines academic procrastination as a tendency to postpone completing academic tasks, both assignments and study. (Moonaghi et.al, 2021) state that academic procrastination is a tendency to delay academic activities, such as cramming. Students who do academic procrastination will find it difficult to complete tasks in time. That is why academic procrastination will result in time inefficiency. It must be stopped, unless students will get disadvantaged.

Based on the results of a meta-analysis search and systematic review, (Binder in Berber Çelik & Odaci, 2020) mentions several interventions that have effectively succeeded in reducing academic procrastination, including group counseling, psychodynamic counseling, behavioral counseling and cognitive counseling. In this case, group counseling and behavior approaches were the interventions that researchers used. It was used based on the opinion by (Wibowo, 2019), namely group counseling is a very important process of helping communication to overcome problems experienced by students, such as academic procrastination. Meanwhile, behavioral approach was used on the basis of an idea by (Corey, 2016), namely behavioral approach focuses on directing students to acquire new behaviors, eliminating maladaptive behaviors and strengthening and maintaining desired behaviors. More specifically, the techniques used were self-management and token economy

techniques. Both are techniques contained in the behavioral counseling approach.

(Howard et.al, 2020) stat that self-management can be systematically used to identify the most effective and efficient intervention package for high school students. (Briesch et.al, 2019) add that self-management is the most often used technique to target students' task behavior, given they are responsible for managing themselves in the future. Then, (Doll et.al, 2013) state token economy is an effective method in managing behavior from various school settings. (Martin & Pear, 2019) mention token economy has an effect to strengthen and reward one's behavior so that later on students will be able to form new behavior to complete their academic tasks on time.

Studies on academic procrastination have been carried out many. (Alexandrova, 2015) mentions 46% until 95% of students at high school prefer doing academic procrastination. Then, (Vargas, 2017) states that 89% of students consistently practice academic procrastination in different ways depending on the types of task. For more, (Balkis & Duru, 2019) explain 65% of students often do procrastination in both daily and academic lives, and this behavior causes their productivity to decline. (Saputra & Lidyawati, 2019) conclude that students who practice academic procrastination involve feeling bad when they want to do something but choose not to do it, where this has the potential to cause maladaptive behavior. Some previous studies have proved that academic procrastination is something that often occurs among students, which of course requires more serious handling so that later students can optimize their academic achievement at school.

Some studies using self-management and token economy techniques have been proved effective to improve students' adaptive behavior. In terms of self-management, (Handayani et.al, 2021) explain self-management is able to enhance students' achievement motivation. Here, achievement motivation is known as a factor influencing students' academic procrastination behavior. Then, (Briesch DuBois et.al, 2017) explain self-management works well

for enhancing academic behavior if applied in a group setting. Generally, self-management is viable for being given to students. Another technique, namely token economy as studied by (Gomez et.al, 2020) is said to be able to strengthen students' adaptive behavior, in which the techniques motivate and reduce students' anxiety. Then, (Boniecki & Moore, 2019) argue token economy can influence students' behavior inside and outside a classroom.

Based on the results of the preliminary study at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang using a procrastination scale (Lay, 1986), it was found that 17% of students had a low procrastination level, 29% had a medium level, and the rest 54% had a high level. In addition, interviews with the representative of guidance and counseling teacher at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang showed that students often experienced academic procrastination at school and learning activities both offline and online. This practice was mostly done by students in grade eleven, such as being disorderly in collecting assignments that have been given by subject teachers, having low academic achievement and lacking interest in learning caused by the saturation of learning.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers tested self-management and token economy techniques through group counseling to contribute to reducing academic procrastination, especially in class XI students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang.

METHODS

Based on the pretest, the mean of group A was 97, while group B was 96.57. After treatments were given, the posttest scores of both group were 56.71 for group A and 54.86 for group B.

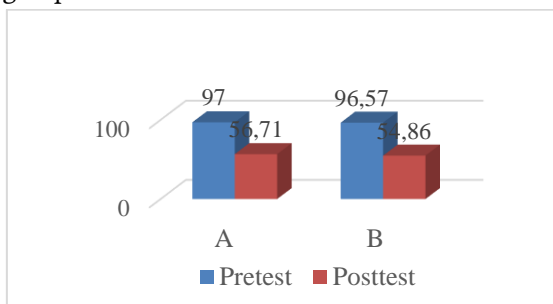


Figure 1. The Graph of Academic Procrastination Levels

Figure 1 shows that the pretest scores of both groups were higher than that of posttest scores. It was good because the data could become a good representative for data distribution. If narrated, each of the subjects showed changes during the provision of a behavioral approach using self-management and token economy techniques.

Table 2. The Results of Data analysis of Wilcoxon test and Mann Whitney U test

Group	Pretest		Posttest		Z ₁
	M	SD	M	SD	
SM	97.00	0.00	56.71	2.69	-2.37 ^b
TE	96.57	0.54	54.86	4.38	-2.36 ^b
Z ₂	*-1,883		*-0,770		

Notes : Z₁ = Wilcoxon, Z₂ = M-W U Test

*p < 0,05 **p < 0,01

Table 2 shows that both techniques were effective in reducing academic procrastination, namely (Z=-2.37, p <0.05) for the self-management and (Z=-2.36, p <0.05) for the token economy.

Still in table 2, there found no difference in the effectiveness of both techniques, namely (Z = -0.770, p > 0.05). This meant that the two experimental groups showed the same level of effectiveness.

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of the academic procrastination of the students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang and measure the effectiveness of self-management and token economy techniques to reduce such issue through a behavioral group counseling service. Another goal was to compare the effectiveness of both techniques during the implementation of group counseling services.

According to the findings, initially the students had a high level of academic procrastination indicated by the attention disorder which got the highest score and

capability belief indicators which got the lowest score. It indicated that there still some students how had high tendency to do academic procrastination at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang. (Saputra et.al, 2017) explain that adolescents who are in the status of students are always faced with various pressures, various problems and environmental demands. However, students at school should have completed their academic assignments because this is the responsibility of every student. Then, (Rabin et.al, 2011) have revealed that academic procrastination is a problem that is felt by students with consequences such as students experiencing a decrease in academic achievement, progress, increased stress and poor quality of life. Thus, it can be concluded that procrastinators are very likely to experience stress, anxiety, decreased academic achievement and so on which make the quality of life worse.

In terms of self-management, the treatment of behavioral group counseling with a self-management technique has been effective to reduce the academic procrastination of students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang. This reduction would surely make the students learning motivation better and finally an enhance their learning achievement. It is in line with a study by (Howard et.al, 2020) who state that a self-management technique can be systematically used to identify the most effective and efficient intervention packages for high school students. In addition, (Briesch et.al, 2019) add self-management is the most often used technique to target students' behavior towards task, given students are responsible for monitoring their own behavior.

The findings of this study have proved that the behavioral group counseling with token economy has been effective to reduce the academic procrastination of students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang. This reduction will surely increase interests and motivation better. A previous study by (Sidiq et.al, 2020) found that token economy works better on academic procrastination reduction. Also, (Lolich et.al, 2012) have revealed token economy can reduce difficulties in learning. Apart from that, the use

of token economy in their study was intended to make students have productive activities that will enable them to achieve success in the future.

In term of the equal results found in both techniques, it might be because both techniques are originally derived from a behavioral approach. Based on (Woolfe in Sanyata, 2012) a behavioral approach is a theoretical and practical approach regarding models of changing counselee behavior in the process of counseling and psychotherapy. In a group setting, (Musafir & Basuki, 2021) explain that the goal of group counseling with a behavioral approach is to eliminate maladaptive behavior (problems) to be replaced with new behavior, namely adaptive behavior desired by the counselee. The purpose of this approach is very suitable for overcoming academic procrastination behavior, because academic procrastination is a maladaptive behavior carried out by students.

In the following, the researchers present several journal articles related to variables of this study. The findings of a study by (Briesch DuBois et.al, 2017) explain that the application of self-management in group counseling settings has proved effective in improving academic behavior. The application of self-management as an intervention is generally understandable, appropriate to use and is desired by students. The results of a study by (Bahri et.al, 2016) conclude that a self-management technique can improve task performance in students with learning disabilities. In addition to performance in carrying out tasks, another aspect that has increased is productivity. A study by (Gomez et.al, 2020) explains that the token economy can strengthen students' adaptive behavior, where the token economy has a positive impact such as providing motivation and reducing student anxiety. Then, a study by (Boniecki & Moore, 2019) explains that using the token economy enable to influence the active behavior of students during teaching and learning activities inside and outside the classroom.

Based on the findings and descriptions, the equal results obtained by both techniques were assumed to happen because those are originated from a behavioral approach, where

when used in group settings, they will always try to change human behavior directly. This is showed by the methods used.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings, the initial level of academic procrastination of the students at SMA Negeri 12 Semarang was high, so it needed some treatments to reduce. After the treatments, it can be concluded that a self-management technique is effective to reduce students' academic procrastination through the implementation of a group counseling service, so is token economy. For more, there is no difference in the level of effectiveness.

The findings of this study can be a reference for guidance and counseling teachers to provide interventions for students who experience academic procrastination. Also, the future studies can improve the limitations exist in it by adding a control group a comparison to the experimental group and plan related to follow-up in monitoring the effect after giving the treatment. Even though significant changes in reducing academic procrastination can be observed, a longer period of time might help in strengthening the research results.

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