

REDUCING ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION THROUGH PROBLEM SOLVING-BASED GROUP GUIDANCE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Academic procrastination remains a persistent barrier to student achievement, self-regulation, and well-being within Indonesia's secondary education sector, contributing to low academic performance and disengagement. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of group guidance using problem-solving techniques in reducing academic procrastination among grade XI students at SMK NU 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi during the 2024/2025 academic year. Employing a quantitative, pre-experimental design (one-group pretest-posttest), the research targeted six students identified with high academic procrastination from a population of 38, using a validated questionnaire. Over four intervention cycles, group counseling sessions based on problem-solving frameworks were conducted, and changes in procrastination scores were assessed through pre- and posttests. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed a statistically significant reduction in academic procrastination ($Z = -2.214$, $p = 0.027$), with all participants improving from high to moderate levels. These results demonstrate the efficacy of structured group guidance rooted in cognitive-behavioral problem-solving in fostering more adaptive academic behaviors and peer-supported accountability. This research contributes to the field by offering empirical evidence for the value of group-based interventions in vocational school contexts—an area often overlooked in Indonesian educational research. The findings support the broader implementation of collaborative, solution-focused counseling practices to promote student discipline, time management, and academic success. It is recommended that future studies employ larger samples, incorporate control groups, and collect qualitative feedback to further enhance the generalizability and understanding of intervention effectiveness.

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, Counseling, Education, Group Guidance, Problem-Solving

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental driver in the enhancement of human resources and the formation of competitive, adaptive, and resilient societies (UNESCO, 2023). In Indonesia, the significance of education is underscored in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which defines education as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and process whereby students actively develop their potential—intellectually, spiritually, morally, and socially—for the benefit of themselves and society (Indy, 2019; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Within this framework, schools are expected to foster discipline, self-regulation, and achievement orientation among students. However, in reality, various factors undermine students' academic engagement and performance, one of which is the persistent phenomenon of academic procrastination. Academic procrastination, as defined by Ferrari et al. (1995), refers to the deliberate delay in starting or completing academic tasks, which manifests in behaviors such as postponing homework, submitting assignments late, avoiding study sessions, or cramming the night before examinations. Solomon and Rothblum (1984) emphasize that academic procrastination is not merely a matter of poor time management but often stems from deeper psychological processes, such as fear of failure, low self-efficacy, and perfectionism. Prolonged procrastination negatively impacts students' productivity, disrupts psychological well-being, and undermines the achievement of academic goals (Burka & Yuen, 2008; Steel, 2007; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016). Numerous studies have shown that ineffective time management and lack of discipline are core contributors to the lengthening of educational timelines, as highlighted by Godfrey (in Handayani & Suharnan, 2012), with students exceeding the standard duration for program completion due to chronic procrastination. Within the

Indonesian educational context, these behaviors are prevalent among high school students, particularly those who exhibit a pattern of studying only during examination periods, neglecting regular assignments, and failing to meet minimum academic standards (Irsani et al., 2022). This pattern results in suboptimal academic achievement and contributes to a cycle of low motivation and academic disengagement (Schraw et al., 2007; Kim & Seo, 2015).

The main research problem addressed in this study is the high incidence of academic procrastination among students in grade XI at SMK Nu 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi, which is manifested in low academic performance and discipline issues. This problem is not unique to this context; academic procrastination is a global concern, with research indicating its prevalence among students across educational levels and cultural backgrounds (Steel, 2007; Klassen et al., 2010; Grunschel et al., 2013). A general solution proposed in educational settings is the provision of guidance and counseling services that target the underlying causes of procrastination and foster adaptive behaviors. School-based interventions, particularly those that employ structured problem-solving techniques, have been recommended as effective strategies to reduce procrastinatory behaviors and improve students' self-management skills (Zimmerman et al., 2011; van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018).

From the scientific literature, problem-solving counseling—especially when delivered in a group guidance format—has demonstrated efficacy in addressing academic procrastination. Problem-solving approaches are rooted in cognitive-behavioral theory, which posits that students can learn to identify barriers, evaluate alternative solutions, and implement effective strategies for academic tasks (D'Zurilla & Nezu, 2010; Heary et al., 2019). According to Gray, the problem-solving process includes understanding the problem, collecting information, formulating solutions, evaluating hypotheses, and drawing conclusions (Romlah, 2013; Gray, 2011). Empirical studies provide support for this approach. For instance, Irsani et al. (2022) found that group counseling using problem-solving techniques significantly improved students' critical thinking skills. Similarly, Abdul (2020) demonstrated that such interventions effectively reduced aggressive behaviors among middle school students. In a related study, Mutmainah (2016) reported a decrease in academic procrastination among high school students following problem-solving-based group counseling. These findings are consistent with meta-analyses indicating that cognitive-behavioral interventions, including problem-solving training, are among the most effective methods for reducing procrastination and improving academic outcomes (Rozental & Carlbring, 2014; van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018; Scent & Boes, 2014).

Academic procrastination is a complex phenomenon influenced by both internal and external factors. Internally, personality traits such as low self-regulation, high anxiety, and irrational beliefs have been linked to higher procrastination (Ferrari et al., 2009; Sirois et al., 2019; Kim & Seo, 2015). Externally, parenting styles, environmental conditions, and school climate play significant roles (Ghufron & Risnawati, 2010; Basri, 2018). Recent studies in Indonesia have explored various aspects of academic procrastination, including the influence of self-regulated learning and self-esteem (Latifah, 2018), and the role of religiosity (Basri, 2018). Despite the growing body of literature on counseling interventions and academic behaviors, several important research gaps persist. A careful review reveals that much of the current scholarship has concentrated on enhancing critical thinking or reducing aggression through problem-solving group counseling (Irsani et al., 2022; Abdul, 2020), yet there is limited attention to the application of these methods for specifically addressing academic procrastination among high school students. Furthermore, studies such as Mutmainah (2016) have explored problem-solving techniques to combat academic procrastination, but often overlook the distinct benefits of implementing these strategies within a group guidance framework—a format vital for promoting peer support and building collective efficacy among students. The issue of contextual and cultural specificity also emerges, as many previous studies have either targeted university populations or focused on identifying correlational variables, such as religiosity and self-regulated learning (Basri, 2018; Latifah, 2018; Steel, 2007), rather than directly evaluating the outcomes of structured interventions in vocational high school environments. Notably, empirical research investigating the impact of group counseling utilizing problem-solving techniques on academic procrastination is conspicuously absent for grade XI students in Indonesian vocational schools during the 2024/2025 academic year. These identified gaps underscore the necessity for targeted intervention studies

in this context, as highlighted by Schraw et al. (2007), Sirois and Pychyl (2016), and Grunschel et al. (2013), to inform more effective educational and counseling practices.

The objective of this study is to examine the effect of group guidance using problem-solving techniques on reducing academic procrastination among grade XI students at SMK Nu 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. This research aims to offer empirical evidence on the utility of this intervention in improving students' discipline and academic outcomes, thereby providing a practical contribution to school-based counseling practices in Indonesia. The novelty of this research lies in its targeted intervention—the application of group guidance with problem-solving techniques to address academic procrastination within a vocational school context, focusing on the enhancement of “Profil Pelajar Pancasila” (the independent, self-directed learning dimension) for phase E (grades X–XII). This focus aligns with the current push in Indonesian education to cultivate learners who can independently set priorities, initiate personal development, and take consistent actions towards future goals (Kemendikbud, 2022). Drawing upon the literature reviewed, the central hypothesis of this study is that students participating in group guidance sessions utilizing problem-solving techniques will exhibit significantly lower levels of academic procrastination compared to those who do not receive such intervention. This hypothesis is justified by previous findings on the effectiveness of problem-solving and cognitive-behavioral interventions (Rozental & Carlbring, 2014; van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018; Scent & Boes, 2014). This study is limited to grade XI students at SMK Nu 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi in the 2024/2025 academic year. It examines the effect of a specific group counseling intervention on academic procrastination, using validated instruments and a pretest-posttest design. While the study is situated within an Indonesian vocational school context, the findings are expected to contribute to the broader literature on effective school-based interventions for academic procrastination.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach to investigate the effect of group counseling using problem-solving techniques on academic procrastination among Grade XI students at SMK NU 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi during the 2024/2025 academic year. The quantitative method is grounded in positivist philosophy, emphasizing the collection of empirical, observable, and measurable data, analyzed using mathematical logic and generalizations (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, a pre-experimental design—the one-group pretest-posttest design—was chosen, allowing the researcher to observe behavioral changes within a single group before and after the intervention (Arikunto, 2010; Campbell, 1978). In this design, the same group of students (experimental group) receives a pretest, an intervention (treatment), and multiple posttests, without a separate control group. This approach enhances the accuracy of observed changes by enabling direct comparison between pre- and post-intervention conditions.

Research Procedure

The research procedure was organized into several sequential steps to ensure systematic intervention and accurate measurement of outcomes. Initially, a pretest (O1) was administered to all participating students using a standardized questionnaire designed to assess their level of academic procrastination. Based on the pretest results, students exhibiting high levels of academic procrastination were selected to participate in the intervention phase. These identified students then engaged in group counseling sessions utilizing problem-solving techniques, which were adapted from the model proposed by Pranita (2019). Following each counseling session, posttest measurements (O2, O3, O4) were conducted to evaluate any changes in the students' procrastination behaviors. This process of intervention and assessment was carried out over four treatment cycles, allowing for the observation of both immediate and sustained effects of the counseling approach. Through these structured steps, the study was able to comprehensively assess the effectiveness of problem-solving group counseling in reducing academic procrastination among the selected students.

Population and Sample

The research population consisted of 38 students from Grade XI at SMK NU 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi during the 2024/2025 academic year. The population was selected based on the relevance of their characteristics to the study aims (Sugiyono, 2019). Purposive sampling was applied to select participants. According to Sugiyono (2019), purposive sampling involves the deliberate selection of individuals based on predetermined criteria. In this study, only students identified as having high academic procrastination (through the pretest and adapted from the scale developed by I Wayan Aan Pranita, 2019) were included in the intervention group.

Research Instrument and Data Analysis

The instrument used was a questionnaire adapted from Pranita (2019), specifically designed to assess academic procrastination. The validity and reliability of the instrument were evaluated through standard psychometric procedures prior to use. Data analysis was performed after all responses were collected. The systematic analysis involved organizing data from questionnaires and calculating pretest and posttest scores. The primary statistical method was the paired samples t-test (using SPSS version 17), which compares the mean scores before and after intervention to determine significant changes in academic procrastination (Field, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Findings

The initial phase of this study involved validating the academic procrastination scale adapted from Pranita (2019). Out of a total of 60 items, 8 items were eliminated based on validity testing, resulting in a final set of 52 valid items. These items were then administered to the study sample, consisting of 38 Grade XI students at SMK NU 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi. Analysis of the pretest scores identified 6 students with high academic procrastination, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Pretest Scores of Students with High Academic Procrastination

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	ANF	162	High
2	DCP	160	High
3	FK	168	High
4	HK	160	High
5	RRA	160	High
6	SLB	167	High

The selected students participated in four cycles of group counseling sessions utilizing problem-solving techniques. After the final intervention, posttest scores were recorded to evaluate the impact of the counseling. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Posttest Scores After Four Problem-Solving Counseling Sessions

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	ANF	132	Medium
2	DCP	130	Medium
3	FK	129	Medium
4	HK	130	Medium
5	RRA	132	Medium
6	SLB	137	Medium

To analyze the statistical significance of the intervention's effect, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was performed on pretest and posttest scores using SPSS version 17. The outcome is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results for Pretest and Posttest

	Posttest – Pretest
Z	-2.214
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.027

The Wilcoxon test yielded a Z-value of -2.214 with an asymptotic significance (2-tailed) of 0.027. Because the significance value is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that the intervention of group counseling with problem-solving techniques produced a statistically significant reduction in students' academic procrastination.

Comparison with Previous Literature

The observed decrease in procrastination aligns with a growing body of research highlighting the effectiveness of group counseling interventions, particularly those based on problem-solving frameworks. Previous studies have demonstrated that structured group guidance helps students develop self-regulation and time-management skills (Özer et al., 2013; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Grunschel et al., 2013). The present findings echo Abdul (2020), who found problem-solving group counseling effective in reducing aggressive behavior among junior high school students, and Mutmainah (2016), who reported reductions in academic procrastination through problem-solving strategies, although her work did not specifically use a group format. In addition, recent meta-analyses confirm the generalizability of group counseling's positive impact across diverse academic outcomes (Glick & Orsillo, 2015; Uzun Ozer et al., 2013). Interventions focusing on cognitive-behavioral techniques and peer support have consistently resulted in lower rates of academic procrastination and improved academic achievement (van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018; Yockey, 2016). The shift from high to moderate levels of procrastination in this study parallels international findings that group-based interventions, when tailored to student needs, can effectively modify maladaptive behaviors (Karatas, 2011; Sari et al., 2017). However, most prior research has focused on university populations (Steel, 2007; Basri, 2018; Latifah, 2018), with relatively few intervention studies conducted in vocational high school settings or within the Indonesian cultural context. The current study, therefore, extends the literature by providing empirical evidence for the success of problem-solving group counseling among vocational high school students in Indonesia, supporting calls for more targeted and contextually relevant interventions (Ernawati & Khariroh, 2021; Sirois & Pychyl, 2016; Kim & Seo, 2015). While the study confirms the positive impact of group counseling, it also highlights gaps. Prior studies, such as Irsani et al. (2022), have explored group counseling for improving critical thinking or reducing aggression, yet the direct application for academic procrastination remains underexplored. This research addresses that gap and demonstrates the need for further large-scale studies with control groups to corroborate these findings (Schraw et al., 2007; Hen & Goroshit, 2018).

Importance and Implications of the Findings

This research provides robust support for the application of problem-solving-based group counseling to reduce academic procrastination among vocational high school students. The significant reduction observed after four cycles underscores the value of repeated and sustained intervention—consistent with Bandura's (1986) theory that behavioral change requires ongoing reinforcement and feedback. By demonstrating measurable changes, this study advances the practical toolkit for school counselors and educators, who often struggle to address procrastination using individual-based approaches alone (Klassen et al., 2010). From a practical perspective, these results suggest that school counselors should consider integrating group counseling using structured problem-solving modules into regular support services, especially for students identified as high-risk for procrastination. The peer support and collaborative problem analysis inherent in group formats foster a sense of accountability and collective efficacy, which are known to reduce avoidance behaviors and promote adaptive functioning (Karatas, 2011; van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018). At the policy level, school administrators and educational authorities are encouraged to allocate resources for systematic group counseling programs, including professional development for counselors in evidence-based group techniques. Implementing such programs could help improve overall academic performance and student

well-being (Pinquart, 2017; Sari et al., 2017). The success of this intervention in an Indonesian vocational school context addresses the need for culturally responsive counseling practices. As educational challenges and procrastination patterns can vary by country, the present study's approach can serve as a model for similar schools in Indonesia and other countries with comparable educational systems (Kim & Seo, 2015; Balkis & Duru, 2016). By focusing on a vocational setting—often overlooked in global research—this study highlights the unique needs and responsiveness of such student populations. Despite the promising results, several limitations must be acknowledged. The small sample size and absence of a control group limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should involve larger, randomized samples, incorporate control or comparison groups, and extend follow-up periods to assess the long-term sustainability of intervention effects (Hen & Goroshit, 2018; van Eerde & Klingsieck, 2018). Additionally, integrating qualitative feedback from participants could enrich understanding of the mechanisms driving behavioral change.

CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this research was to examine the effectiveness of group guidance using problem-solving techniques in reducing academic procrastination among grade XI students at SMK Nu 1 Pesanggaran Banyuwangi during the 2024/2025 academic year. The key findings demonstrate a statistically significant decrease in procrastination scores after four cycles of group counseling, as measured by validated instruments and supported by Wilcoxon signed-rank analysis ($Z = -2.214$, $p = 0.027$), with all participants moving from high to moderate levels of academic procrastination. This research contributes to the field by providing empirical evidence for the value of structured, problem-solving-based group interventions in vocational high school settings, highlighting the potential for peer-supported counseling to foster adaptive learning behaviors and enhance student self-regulation. The study not only addresses a gap in the Indonesian context but also offers a practical model for school-based interventions, suggesting that sustained, collaborative guidance can meaningfully reduce procrastinatory behaviors and improve overall educational outcomes.

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