



Group Counseling with Contract-Behaviour Technique to Reduce Academic Procrastination in High School Students

Hafiski Luthfinuddin Isnanda¹, Rosa Imani Khan², Devi Asmiranda Milasanty³

¹² Department of Teacher Professional Education, Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri, Kediri City, Indonesia

³ Teacher of Department of Guidance and Counseling, Senior High School 3 Kediri, Kediri City, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received 2025-04-24

Revised 2025-05-19

Accepted 2025-06-27

Keywords:

Academic procrastination

Group counselling

Behavior-contract

Student motivation

Self-regulation

ABSTRACT

Academic procrastination negatively impacts students' performance and psychological well-being. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of group counseling using the Behaviour-Contract technique to reduce academic procrastination among high school students. The research involved six students from Class X-7 at Senior High School 3 Kediri and was conducted using a Classroom Action Research (CAR) model over two cycles. The intervention combined behavioral contracts, peer support, and positive reinforcement within structured counseling sessions. Data were collected through observation sheets, behavior contracts, and the Pure Procrastination Scale (PPS), then analyzed using Repeated Measures ANOVA. Results indicated a significant reduction in procrastination levels across both cycles. Improvements were also noted in students' time management, self-regulation, and academic responsibility. Group interaction and reflective discussion enhanced motivation and engagement. These findings suggest that the Behaviour-Contract technique in group counseling is an effective method for reducing academic procrastination and fostering positive behavioral change in students.

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Corresponding Author:

Hafiski Luthfinuddin Isnanda

Department of Teacher Professional Education, Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri, Jl. Ahmad Dahlan No.76, Mojoroto, Kec. Mojoroto, Kota Kediri, Jawa Timur 64112

Email: hafiskiviky15@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the essential pillar for cultivating competent individuals with strong character. In the learning process, students' academic achievement serves as one of the indicators of educational success, influenced by various factors such as teaching methods, learning environments, and individual motivation. Nonetheless, various challenges frequently emerge during this process, one of the most common being academic procrastination, a behavior characterized by the deliberate postponement of academic tasks despite recognizing its adverse consequences (Steel, 2007). This condition influences not only students' academic achievements but also their psychological health, as it is often associated with diminished motivation, anxiety about failure, and poor time management abilities (Ferrari, 2010; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

Academic procrastination is reflected in various forms, such as delaying the initiation or completion of assignments, missing deadlines, and failing to follow through on planned tasks, as students tend to choose more enjoyable activities over academic responsibilities (Ferrari, 2007). According to Ghufroon and Risnawati (2016), factors that contribute to procrastination include physical and psychological conditions, parenting styles, learning environments, as well as anxiety and fear of failure (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). This phenomenon has also been observed at SMA Negeri 3 Kediri, where an initial assessment revealed that 78% of students in class X-7 displayed a high tendency toward academic procrastination. These findings emphasize the importance of implementing structured and evidence-based interventions grounded in behavior modification principles.

One of the promising intervention strategies to address academic procrastination is group counseling using the Behaviour-Contract technique. Group counseling, as defined by Prayitno (2013) and Nurihsan (2012), is a psychological assistance service conducted in a group setting that helps students discuss and resolve problems dynamically through interaction and peer reflection. The Behaviour-Contract technique itself is a written or verbal agreement between the counselor and the counselee, specifying behavioral targets, success criteria, and a reinforcement system as a means of supporting the desired behavioral transformation (Erford, 2017; Chalimi, 2017; Majeika, Wilkinson, & Kumm, 2020). This approach is rooted in Skinner's reinforcement theory, which emphasizes the role of reward and punishment in shaping new, positive, and responsible behavior (Komalasari, 2014; Fauzan, 2009).

Previous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of the Behaviour-Contract technique in reducing academic procrastination and fostering students' accountability for their academic tasks. Research conducted by Rozali and Wijayanti (2020) demonstrated that students who participated in group counseling with the Behaviour-Contract technique showed improvements in time management and self-discipline. Likewise, Setiawan and Rahmawati (2021) and Hasanah et al. (2022) revealed that this technique not only reduced procrastination but also enhanced emotional regulation, responsibility, and self-confidence in facing academic demands. Through this structured approach, students gain both practical solutions for task management and social support to cope with academic pressures more adaptively.

Based on the theoretical background and previous research, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of group counseling using the Behaviour-Contract technique in reducing academic procrastination among class X-7 students at SMA Negeri 3 Kediri. This approach is expected to assist students in developing realistic academic plans, positive thinking patterns, disciplined learning habits, and a stronger sense of responsibility. The findings of this research are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of behavior-based counseling interventions, while also offering practical guidelines for teachers, counselors, and educational institutions in addressing academic procrastination more effectively and sustainably.

METHOD

Participants

This study involved six students from class X-7 at SMA Negeri 3 Kediri, comprising a total of 35 students, including 13 males and 22 females. The research was conducted with six subjects selected using purposive sampling techniques, specifically targeting students identified as having very high or high levels of academic procrastination. All subjects successfully completed

the group counseling activities and actively participated throughout the sessions, having provided their consent to engage in the group counseling until its conclusion.

Procedures

This study employed the Classroom Action Research (CAR) model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four stages in each cycle: planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection, carried out over two cycles. In the first cycle, students with high levels of academic procrastination were identified through a pretest (pre-cycle) using the Pure Procrastination Scale (PPS) (Steel, 2010), followed by the preparation of a group counseling plan using the contract-behaviour technique, determination of schedules and materials, and the development of research instruments. The intervention was then implemented through group counseling using the contract-behaviour technique, followed by observation of student engagement, changes in academic behavior, and analysis of the first posttest (Cycle I), and concluded with reflection to identify obstacles and formulate improvement strategies.

In the second cycle, the intervention was continued based on the reflection results from the first cycle, with an emphasis on behavioral consistency and positive reinforcement. This was followed by observation, analysis of the second posttest (Cycle II), evaluation of effectiveness through hypothesis testing, and final reflection to conclude the success of the intervention.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted through two cycles of action research, each consisting of the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. These stages were designed to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of group counseling using the Behavior Contract technique in reducing academic procrastination among 6 students of class X-7 at SMA Negeri 3 Kediri.

At the initial stage, a pretest was administered using the Pure Procrastination Scale (PPS) to identify the levels of academic procrastination among the subjects. The findings revealed that all six students demonstrated elevated levels of academic procrastination, which reflected frequent postponements in task completion and challenges in managing their study time effectively.

After the implementation of the first cycle, which applied group counseling with behavior contracts, a reduction in procrastination scores was noted among the majority of students. Although the reduction was not yet statistically significant, this initial change indicated a positive response to the intervention. However, some challenges were encountered, such as low adherence to the behavior contract and difficulties in consistently applying time management strategies. These obstacles were reflected upon and addressed in the second cycle.

During the second cycle, the intervention approach was enhanced by incorporating positive reinforcement and reinforcing peer support dynamics within the counseling group. The counseling sessions were made more interactive and reflective, enhancing emotional and cognitive engagement. The posttest results from the second cycle revealed a significant decrease in procrastination scores among all subjects. Most students demonstrated improved time

management, increased responsibility, and reduced tendencies to delay academic work. The table below presents the detailed scores for each subject:

Table 1. Research Data

Subject	Pretest (Pre-Cycle)	Posttest 1 (Cycle 1)	Posttest 2 (Cycle 2)
Student 1	55	44	32
Student 2	53	52	32
Student 3	49	41	23
Student 4	51	34	35
Student 5	52	33	29
Student 6	56	52	20

Table 2. Normality Test Result

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest (Pre-Cycle)	.150	6	.200*	.979	6	.945
Posttest 1 (Cycle 1)	.202	6	.200*	.885	6	.294
Posttest 2 (Cycle 2)	.226	6	.200*	.912	6	.452

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Table 3. Repeated Measures ANOVA Test Result

Tests of Within-Subjects Effects						
Measure: Prokrastinasi_Akademik						
Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pengukuran	Sphericity Assumed	1769.444	2	884.722	22.499	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1769.444	1.227	1441.938	22.499	.002
	Huynh-Feldt	1769.444	1.421	1244.856	22.499	.001
	Lower-bound	1769.444	1.000	1769.444	22.499	.005
Error(Pengukuran)	Sphericity Assumed	393.222	10	39.322		
	Greenhouse-Geisser	393.222	6.136	64.088		
	Huynh-Feldt	393.222	7.107	55.329		
	Lower-bound	393.222	5.000	78.644		

Normality testing using the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the data were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, further analysis was conducted using Repeated Measures ANOVA. The results, analyzed using the Greenhouse-Geisser correction, indicated a statistically

significant difference ($p = .002$) using the Greenhouse-Geisser correction, suggesting a statistically significant difference across the three measurements.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that group counseling utilizing the Behaviour-Contract technique has a positive impact on reducing students' academic procrastination. This result aligns with the research by Hambali and Rahman (2021), who asserted that behavioral contracts in group counseling help students develop a more structured and disciplined academic pattern. The implementation of behavior contracts enables students to strengthen their commitment to academic tasks, thus reducing their tendency to procrastinate. Similarly, Mahardika (2020) found this technique effective in raising students' awareness of the consequences of academic procrastination, encouraging them to complete tasks more promptly.

In this study, students' compliance with the behavior contract showed a significant improvement between the first and second cycles. Contributing factors included the use of positive reinforcement and reflective group discussions. Hunt et al. (2019) emphasized that behavior-based reinforcement in academic intervention programs yields more effective results in shaping consistent learning behaviors. This was evident in the second cycle of the present study, where students rewarded for adhering to the behavior contract demonstrated greater motivation to maintain their academic commitment.

Moreover, student participation in group counseling sessions gradually increased. Initially, some students were passive and hesitant to share their experiences with academic procrastination. However, as a more supportive group environment developed, they became more open and active in discussions. Sari and Ayriza (2021) stressed that interaction in behavior-based group counseling facilitates mutual support among students during behavioral change processes, thus enabling them to adopt better academic habits. In this context, students' openness in sharing experiences had a positive effect on building self-awareness of procrastination habits and encouraged progressive behavioral change. Improvement in students' time management skills also emerged as a significant outcome. Following the group counseling intervention, more students began to implement daily scheduling and task prioritization strategies to avoid task accumulation. According to Ugwuanyi et al. (2020), behavior-based intervention techniques assist students in developing better time management patterns, ultimately leading to reduced levels of academic procrastination. In this study, students who adopted such strategies not only completed tasks more efficiently but also gained a greater sense of control over their academic schedules.

With respect to the effectiveness of group counseling, this study found that the Behaviour-Contract technique not only reduced academic procrastination but also had a psychological impact on students. Jamilludin and Sugiharto (2019) reported that behavioral contracts in group counseling are effective in changing academic habits and fostering self-regulation skills. In the current study, students who initially experienced high anxiety toward academic tasks showed a reduction in anxiety levels after several counseling sessions. This indicates that the Behaviour-

Contract technique supports both task completion and the development of a more positive mindset toward academic challenges.

Furthermore, Purnama et al. (2019) highlighted that behavior-based interventions in group counseling can enhance students' academic motivation, especially when implemented in a supportive environment with continuous monitoring and evaluation. This finding is consistent with the current study, in which group counseling served not only as a platform for experience-sharing but also as a monitoring system for students' academic commitments. Through reflective sessions at each meeting, students were given the opportunity to evaluate their progress in overcoming procrastination, thereby fostering self-driven improvement.

The study also supports the findings of Sugiharto et al. (2020), who stated that the Behaviour-Contract technique is more effective when combined with cognitive restructuring strategies. In this research, students who were better able to identify procrastination-supporting thought patterns exhibited faster behavioral changes compared to those who engaged only in behavior contracts without deep reflection. Thus, integrating Behaviour-Contract techniques with cognitive strategies may offer a more comprehensive approach to addressing academic procrastination among students. On a broader scale, Demir and Ferrari (2013) emphasized that group-based interventions for academic procrastination are more effective than individual approaches. This is due to the support students receive not only from the counselor but also from peers, which increases their motivation for change. In this study, students who previously struggled to overcome procrastination reported feeling more motivated after observing the progress of their peers in the group. This highlights the importance of group dynamics in the success of behavior-based interventions.

Based on the results of this study and supporting literature, it can be concluded that group counseling using the Behaviour-Contract technique is an effective method for helping students address academic procrastination. This approach contributes not only to improving academic motivation and responsibility but also enhances time management skills and student engagement in more productive learning environments. Therefore, this method can be recommended as a broader intervention strategy in educational settings, particularly to support students in becoming more organized and accountable in their academic responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that group counseling using the Behaviour-Contract technique is an effective intervention for reducing academic procrastination among students. The intervention not only enhanced students' commitment to academic tasks but also significantly improved their time management, motivation, and self-regulation skills. The findings highlight the importance of structured behavioral strategies, such as contracts and positive reinforcement, in promoting consistent and disciplined academic behaviors.

Moreover, the group counseling setting played a crucial role in fostering peer support and reflective dialogue, which further encouraged behavioral change. The progressive increase in

student participation and openness during the sessions demonstrated the potential of a supportive group dynamic to facilitate emotional and cognitive engagement with the counseling process. The integration of behavioral techniques with reflective and cognitive strategies was found to accelerate the process of change, particularly for students who could identify and challenge thought patterns that contributed to procrastination. Therefore, it is recommended that future interventions combine Behaviour-Contract methods with cognitive restructuring to achieve more comprehensive and sustainable outcomes.

In summary, Behaviour-Contract-based group counseling offers a practical and evidence-based approach to addressing academic procrastination and should be considered a valuable tool in educational and psychological support services.

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