

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE IN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract. Vocational high school students are in the adolescent phase which is vulnerable to experiencing psychological pressures due to academic demands, exam preparations, parental expectations, and social pressures from peers. This psychological pressure can lead to psychological problems such as depression. The worst impact of depression and stress on adolescents is the emergence of suicidal tendencies. The phenomenon of suicide in adolescents is initiated by low levels of resilience, which is an individual's ability to adapt to life's difficulties and pressures. Adolescents with low resilience tend to feel hopeless when facing problems and have the potential to attempt suicide. For this reason, school counselors need to strive to increase students' resilience. One approach that can be used is mindfulness technique, which is psychological education that teaches the concept of mindfulness, its benefits, and how to practice it in daily life. Mindfulness technique is considered effective in increasing resilience because mindfulness can foster one's resilience better. This research used action research method with a group counseling approach. The research subjects were 6 students from class XI taken by purposive sampling technique. The research was carried out in 2 cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The results showed a significant increase in resilience scores after being given mindfulness technique intervention. The average resilience score in the post-test ($M = 43.33$) was higher than in the pre-test ($M = 27.67$). The paired sample t-test analysis resulted in a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a negative t-count value (-13.682), which indicated a significant increase in resilience scores. It can be concluded that mindfulness psychoeducation has been empirically proven to be effective in increasing students' resilience.

Keywords: Group counseling; mindfulness techniques; resilience

INTRODUCTION

Vocational high school students are in adolescence, which is a phase of significant growth and development, both physically and psychologically. Individuals who are unable to adapt to changes that occur often experience conflict with themselves and their social environment. According to Prasetyawan (2018), adolescents are usually faced with academic demands, exam preparation, parental expectations, and social pressure from peers which makes them vulnerable to psychological stress. Psychological stress experienced by adolescents can affect mental conditions and cause various psychological problems such as depression (Hasmi, 2016). One of the worst impacts of depression is the emergence of suicidal tendencies. WHO data (2018) notes that suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds worldwide. In Indonesia, the prevalence of suicidal behavior in adolescents aged 16-18 years was recorded at 9.8 per 1000 people based on the results of Riskesdas (2018). Based on data collected by Kompas in the period 2012 to 2023, 2,112 suicide cases have been recorded in Indonesia and as many as 985 cases or 46.63% were committed by teenagers.

Furthermore, based on the results of the DCM analysis distributed in several class XI SMK Negeri 6 Yogyakarta, it stated that there were students who were indicated to have suicidal tendencies, namely class XI Culinary 1 with 5 people, XI Culinary 2 with 5 people, XI Fashion Design 1 with 4 people, and XI ULP with 6 people. So it can be said that out of 4 classes, 20 students have suicidal tendencies. Furthermore, preliminary research conducted on 78 class XI students of SMK Negeri 6 Yogyakarta stated that as many as 29% of students had a high level of resilience, 58% were in the

medium category and 13% got a low score. From the data, there are still levels of resilience with medium and low categories that are initiated, which can be one of the triggering factors for suicidal tendencies.

Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to adapt to difficulties, trauma, and stress in life (Reivich & Shatte, 2002). Adolescents who have low resilience are unable to rise and tend to despair when faced with problems. So they are likely to attempt suicide. This is reinforced by several studies that have shown that low resilience is more prone to having thoughts and making suicide attempts (Rutter, 1985). Therefore, guidance and counseling teachers need to schedule strategic steps to increase student resilience so that they have the fighting power and rise from adversity so that they avoid the phenomenon of suicide. One approach that can be used is mindfulness psychoeducation.

Winzelberg & Luskin (1999) define mindfulness psychoeducation as a form of psychological education designed to teach the concept of mindfulness, its benefits, and how to practice it in everyday life. Mindfulness techniques are practices that focus on non-judgmental awareness and focus on the present (Boden et al, 2023). The same thing also states that mindfulness techniques can increase coherence and increase resilience in students (Polizy et al, 2023). Students will be given guidance to explore the meaning and practice of mindfulness in everyday life to develop resilience. Research conducted by Farial et al (2022) stated that brief-based mindfulness psychoeducation can increase the resilience of adolescents at the Muhammadiyah 3 Banjarmasin orphanage. Therefore, this Guidance and Counseling action research wants to show empirical data regarding mindfulness psychoeducation services in increasing student resilience and determine the effectiveness of mindfulness techniques in increasing resilience.

RESEARCH METHOD

The population in this study was class XI SBT with 29 students. The subjects involved in the study were 6 people who were taken using purposive sampling techniques. The considerations used were based on the results of the pretest carried out on the entire population and the data with the lowest results would be taken. The data collection method used a resilience scale. The approach to this research is quantitative with the type of Guidance and Counseling Action Research using the group guidance method. This guidance and counseling action research will be carried out in 2 cycles consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The following is the research procedure:

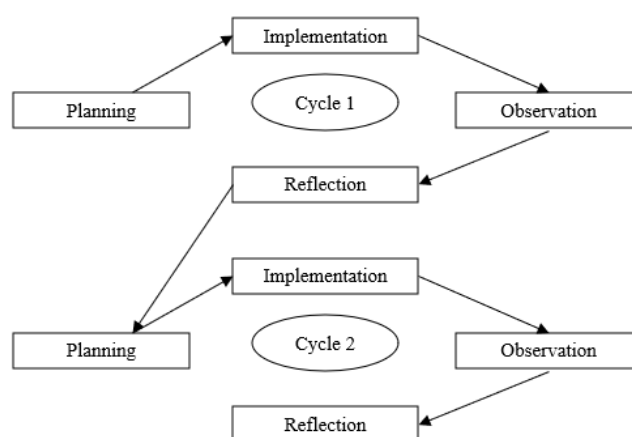


Fig 1. Research Procedure

In cycle 1, the planning stage will be a pre-test to the population to obtain research samples. In addition, a service implementation plan (RPL) will be prepared which has been equipped with group

guidance materials and media. Then, at the implementation stage, group guidance will be held with 6 subjects using the mindfulness psychoeducation technique. Group guidance activities will be carried out in 1-2 meetings with a time of 40-45 minutes per meeting. The observation stage process is carried out during the implementation of group guidance services by paying attention to the enthusiastic response and the accuracy of the techniques provided. Then at the end of the service meeting, the researcher will provide an evaluation sheet to students to measure their understanding of the material. The last stage is reflection, the researcher will analyze the results of the implementation in cycle 1. The things that are considered are the results of the observation/evaluation of the process during the group guidance service and the results of the questionnaire distributed to students. Both results can be used as a reference for improving the provision of services in cycle 2.

Furthermore, the implementation procedure for cycle 2 starts from the planning stage which consists of improvements regarding the implementation of services according to the results of the reflection of cycle 1. Furthermore, the implementation process is almost the same as cycle 1, namely providing group guidance with mindfulness psychoeducational interventions which are expected to be better. The observation process is carried out during the service process and as an evaluation of the results, a resilience scale (post-test) will be given to measure the level of resilience of students after participating in 2 cycles of action. The data will be analyzed quantitatively with the help of SPSS which is carried out with descriptive tests and paired sample t tests to measure the significance of the increase in resilience scores and the effectiveness of mindfulness psychoeducation services in increasing student resilience.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The research was realized in 2 cycles. The research process was carried out in accordance with the action research procedure. The following are the results of the research:

1.1 Cycle 1

1.1.1 Planning

In the planning stage, 6 research subjects were produced from class XI SBT and topic development and RPL of group guidance services. In the first meeting, the topic raised was "Getting to know myself when sad". The activities carried out used the expressive writing method, students were asked to write their stories when they were down and analyze the emotions that occurred and the things they did. In the second meeting, the topic raised was still the same, but the BK teacher emphasized the material on mindfulness. In this activity, the material was provided using the mindfulness psychoeducation method where the material discussed the nature and importance of mindfulness.

1.1.2 Implementation

In the implementation stage, participants were very enthusiastic in the first and second meetings. There were some interesting stories from students about heartbreaking things in students. In the second meeting, participants also focused on following the Mindfulness Technique taught to students.

1.1.3 Observation

At the observation stage, participants appeared enthusiastic and open to participating in the activities. Some of them initially seemed a little awkward, but a conducive atmosphere was immediately created after the ice breaking session (introduction). When entering the expressive writing session, initially some of them appeared hesitant, embarrassed and needed time to remember their downfall experiences. However, after a while, the atmosphere became quiet and serious, they began to pour their stories and emotions into writing.

After the writing session was over, participants were invited to share their reflections on the emotions they experienced during their downfall. Many of them expressed feelings of

disgust, sadness, despair, disappointment, and deep frustration. Then, they expressed what they did when they were in that condition to relieve their emotions, namely crying, praying, and even sleeping. Overall, the atmosphere of the meeting was conducive and emotional. Participants appeared open to expressing their emotions and personal experiences.

At the second meeting, the atmosphere seemed more relaxed and casual than the previous meeting. The participants seemed more familiar with the researcher and the atmosphere was more relaxed. The mindfulness psychoeducation session began with an explanation of the concept of mindfulness and its importance in everyday life using the lecture method. At first, some participants seemed confused by the term mindfulness which might still sound foreign to them. However, after the researcher explained it in simpler terms, they began to understand the concept.

1.1.4 Relection

Expressive writing activities provide an opportunity for participants to express and reflect on deep emotional experiences when they are at their lowest point in life. The writing process helps them realize negative emotions such as sadness, despair, and disappointment that they have experienced when they are down. This activity is a good first step to build self-awareness and readiness for participants to face adversity.

The introduction of the concept of mindfulness still feels new to most participants. Participants look enthusiastic but still seem confused so it takes time to understand the material. In cycle 1, the BK teacher gave an evaluation of the results according to the available questionnaire, the result was that all students were still in the low category. Based on the results of the evaluation, it shows that each participant received a low category. This states that the group guidance service in cycle 1 has not achieved its goals. Therefore, follow-up is needed with the implementation of cycle 2. In cycle 2, mindfulness technique will be provided accompanied by direct practice, then the method of delivering the material is packaged in a more interactive method.

1.2 Cycle 2

1.2.1 Planning

The planning stage of cycle 2 includes improvements to the RPL and group guidance service materials based on the results of reflection in cycle 1. Where the improvements made focus on choosing a more interactive service method. At the first meeting of this activity, the provision of material was carried out using demonstration, practice, and discussion methods. The material presented focused on mindfulness techniques. At the second meeting of this activity, an in-depth reflection will be carried out on the implementation of mindfulness in everyday life. Then a post-test will be given to measure the level of resilience.

1.2.2 Implementation

The implementation stage went smoothly according to the plan that had been prepared. Students seemed more enthusiastic and more accustomed to doing mindfulness techniques.

1.2.3 Observation

At the beginning of the meeting, enthusiasm was still visible from the participants. When the researcher explained and demonstrated mindfulness techniques such as breathing meditation, the STOP technique, and grounding, they seemed to be listening seriously. When asked to practice these techniques directly, initially some participants seemed awkward and had difficulty concentrating. However, after the researcher guided them slowly, they began to be able to follow along well. During the practice, the atmosphere became calm. After the practice session, the researcher gave assignments to practice mindfulness in everyday life. Several participants asked about how to apply it in real situations. The researcher also gave simple examples.

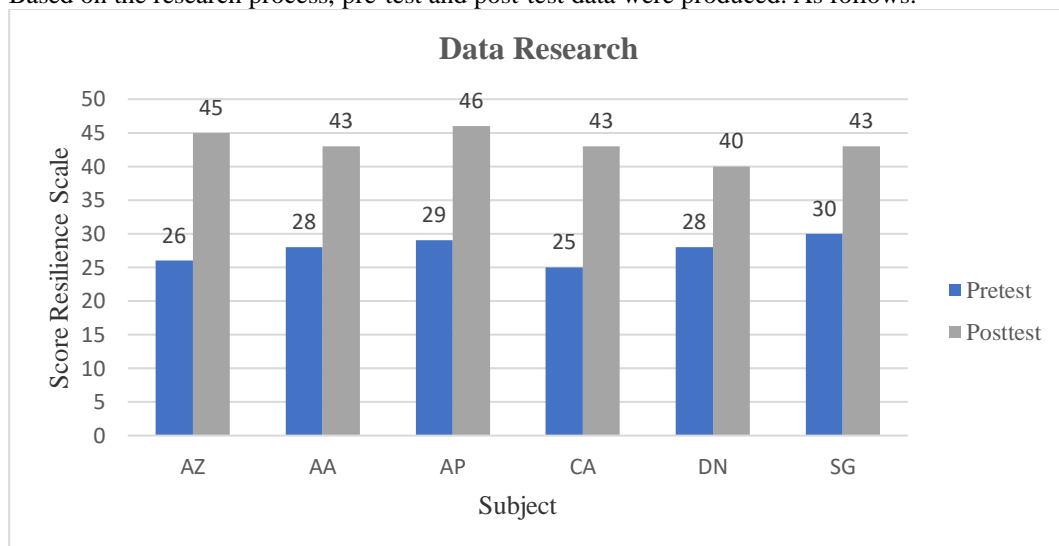
Furthermore, in the fourth meeting, the atmosphere felt more relaxed and friendly. When asked to reflect on their experiences during the activities, participants shared their stories openly. The meeting closed with a positive impression, where participants felt they had gained useful mindfulness skills to face their future lives.

1.2.4 Reflection

Overall, the activities at meetings 3 and 4 provided meaningful experiences for participants in learning and practicing mindfulness as an effort to increase resilience in the face of adversity. The use of direct practice methods was very effective in increasing participants' understanding, so that the last meeting showed positive changes in the participants after participating in this series of activities.

From the post-test data, it was shown that all participants obtained scores in the high category. Therefore, the study was considered sufficient with 2 cycles of action.

Based on the research process, pre-test and post-test data were produced. As follows:



Tabel 1. Data research

Based on the research data in Table 1, it is known that there was a fairly significant increase in the pretest and posttest data in the second cycle.

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre	27.67	6	1.862	.760
	Post	43.33	6	2.066	.843

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre - Post	-15.667	2.805	1.145	-18.610	-12.723	-13.682	5	.000

Tabel 2. Test result

Based on the results of the pre-test data, the minimum value is 26 and the maximum value is 30. The pre-test data obtained an average value of 27.67, which is included in the low category. Furthermore, in the post-test data, the minimum value is 43 and the maximum value is 46. The average post-test value is 43.33, which is included in the high category. When viewed from the average pre-test and post-test values, there is a positive change. This means that participants experienced an increase in scores after the intervention was given.

The results of the paired sample t-test analysis revealed significant findings. The Sig (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < 0.05$ indicates a significant difference between resilience scores in the pre-test and post-test data. Furthermore, the negative t-count value of -13.682 indicates an increase in resilience scores from pre-test to post-test after being given mindfulness psychoeducation intervention. The average increase in post-test scores was 15.6.

ANALYSIS

Based on the results of data testing and the research process for 2 cycles, it can be said that mindfulness psychoeducation interventions have been empirically proven to be effective in increasing resilience. This increase in resilience is in line with previous studies showing that mindfulness practices can increase individual resilience (Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Nath, 2018). In the first cycle, mindfulness psychoeducation was carried out using a combination of expressive writing and lecture methods. The expressive writing method is quite effective in helping participants express their emotions, but the lecture method is considered less effective in delivering material. This is because it seems that participants still have difficulty understanding mindfulness material in depth.

Then, in cycle 2, RPL was developed by improving the method of delivering material. In this cycle, researchers used demonstration methods, direct practice, and discussion. Participants seemed more enthusiastic and found it easier to understand the mindfulness material provided. After the meeting in cycle 2 was held, participants were able to develop an understanding and skills of mindfulness in everyday life. Mindfulness helps individuals become more aware of their current experiences so that they can respond to difficult situations more calmly, adaptively, and wisely (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Based on research by Oh et al (2022), individuals who practice mindfulness techniques tend to have healthy relationships with various problems and challenges and can overcome various difficulties and uncertainties in life. Training in providing mindfulness techniques is also effective in improving academic performance in individuals, because mindfulness allows someone to focus on the activities they are currently doing (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2023).

In fact, mindfulness is one of the most effective instruments for increasing awareness in individuals and is able to foster the ability for individuals to pay full attention (Vidal-Melia et al, 2022). With mindfulness skills, it is hoped that participants can respond to adversity more constructively and resiliently. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Ramler et al. (2017), which found that school-based mindfulness interventions can improve resilience and psychological well-being in high school students. In fact, there is a Mindfulness-Based Therapy and Counseling program (MBTC) that basically combines the theory of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) with mindfulness techniques as an effort to relieve stress and anxiety and help individuals to let go of negative thoughts and emotions (Maneesang, 2022). Reivich and Shatte (2002) stated that resilience can be developed through appropriate training and intervention. Mindfulness psychoeducational interventions provided through group guidance have been shown to be effective in facilitating participants to learn and practice mindfulness skills, which ultimately contribute to increased resilience.

CONCLUSION

This study empirically proves the effectiveness of mindfulness psychoeducation in improving students' resilience. This is indicated by the significant difference between resilience scores in the pre-test and post-test, both descriptively and through statistical analysis of the paired sample t-test with a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < 0.05$. The success of this intervention is supported by the application of various methods, including expressive writing, lectures, demonstrations, direct practice, and discussions. The combination of these methods has proven effective in facilitating the understanding and application of mindfulness skills in students' daily lives. By developing mindfulness skills, students become more adaptive and wise in responding to difficult situations, which ultimately contributes to increasing their resilience.

For further development, it is recommended to conduct collaborative research with mindfulness experts, psychologists, or other researchers to integrate mindfulness with other techniques in a new intervention or approach. Given the success and benefits of this program, Guidance and Counseling teachers are recommended to integrate mindfulness psychoeducation into guidance and counseling services in schools. The use of varied methods is also highly recommended so that students can more easily understand and practice mindfulness skills effectively.

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