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# Self-Instruction Techniques to Reduce Academic Procrastination among University of Indonesia Students

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### Abstrak

Prokrastinasi akademik merupakan perilaku menunda penyelesaian tugas akademik hingga waktu berikutnya dan menggantinya dengan kegiatan lain yang menyenangkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji keberhasilan intervensi teknik self-instruction dalam menurunkan prokrastinasi akademik yang dialami oleh siswa di Jawa Tengah. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain eksperimen one group test. Metode pengumpulan data menggunakan skala berdasarkan aspek prokrastinasi akademik yang dikemukakan oleh Steel (2007) yaitu Perceived time, Intention-action gap, Emotional distress dan Perce, and ability. Subjek dalam penelitian ini sebanyak dua puluh siswa yang menunjukkan perilaku prokrastinasi akademik tinggi berdasarkan skala prokrastinasi akademik. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji parametrik dengan teknik T-test. Hasil analisis menunjukkan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,000 ( $p<0,05$ ) yang berarti terjadi penurunan perilaku prokrastinasi akademik setelah diberikan intervensi teknik instruction. Maka dapat disimpulkan bahwa teknik self-instruction efektif dalam menurunkan tingkat prokrastinasi akademik siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Prokrastinasi Akademik, Self-Instruction Technique, Mahasiswa

### Abstract

*Academic procrastination is the behavior of postponing completing academic assignments until the next time and replacing them with other enjoyable activities. This research aims to examine the success of self-instruction technique interventions in reducing academic procrastination experienced by students in Central Java. This research used a group one-group test experimental design. The data collection method uses a scale based on aspects of academic procrastination proposed by Steel (2007), namely Perceived time, Intention-action gap, Emotional distress and Perce, and ability. The subjects in this research were twenty students who showed high academic procrastination behavior based on the academic procrastination scale. The collected data were then analyzed using a parametric test with the T-test technique. The analysis results showed a significance value of 0.000 ( $p<0.05$ ) which means that there was a decrease in academic procrastination behavior after being given an instruction technique intervention. So, it can be concluded that the self-instruction technique is effective in reducing the level of student academic procrastination.*

**Keywords:** Academic Procrastination, Self-Instruction Technique, University Student

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## INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is one of the problems often faced by students in various universities, where students postpone their academic tasks or work. This habit not only affects academic performance, but can also cause excessive stress and anxiety. Although various strategies have been proposed to overcome this problem, procrastination remains a significant challenge for many students. The college period is a time when students have a freer time system than when they were at the previous level of education. Even so, students are required to be able to manage their own time well, for example, to go to, college, go out with friends, research, gather with family, do assignments, and so on (Basri, 2018).

Students are expected to be able to go through every process and lecture activity properly and complete all lecture assignments that have been given (Zahri et al., 2017) according to their duties and responsibilities in the academic field (Kreniske, 2017). However, in reality, students often feel reluctant or lazy to do their assignments, thus encouraging them to avoid assignments that should be done (Saman, 2017). Symptoms of this behavior indicate a tendency not to complete the task immediately which indication of delaying behavior in carrying out and completing the task (Burhan & Herman, 2019). Based on Ojo (2019), procrastination is a very troublesome thing for many students in secondary schools in Nigeria because they like to postpone what they should do at the right time, for example, many students spend a lot of time on social media instead of reading books, even procrastination affects the reading culture among students in Nigeria.

The behavior of delaying completing important tasks is often called procrastination (Suhadianto & Pratitis, 2020). Procrastination is the behavior of postponing an activity or job until the next time and replacing it with another activity. The delay time can be short or it can be protracted. In addition, the replacement activities carried out are usually more enjoyable activities (Wicaksono, 2017). In addition, Sia (in Nufi et al., 2021) adds that procrastination is a pattern of individual behavior that leads to an attitude of procrastination as a fixed response that is often carried out with or without reason accompanied by irrational beliefs and likes to laze until the deadline work is over.

Procrastination can occur in various areas of life such as health, family, routine, work, and academics (Klingsieck, in Suhadianto & Pratitis, 2020). Procrastination that occurs in the academic field is called academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is a common problem faced by students in educational activities (Munawaroh et al., 2017; Utaminingsih & Setyabudi, 2012; Widiseno et al., 2017). Academic procrastination can be said as a tendency to deliberately and repeatedly delay tasks or activities related to academics. Individuals who carry out academic procrastination have difficulty doing things according to predetermined time limits, often experience delays in preparing themselves excessively, or fail to complete academic assignments according to the deadline (Wicaksono, 2017). Based on various studies, academic procrastination is not only influenced by external factors such as heavy workloads and academic pressure, but also by internal factors such as low self-motivation, poor time management, and lack of effective study strategies.

The results of an initial survey conducted by researchers showed that academic procrastination behavior raised by students included not completing assignments given by lecturers, working on assignments close to the specified deadline, prioritizing other activities, and often being late in submitting assignments. This phenomenon illustrates that there are still many students who practice academic procrastination. The cause of academic procrastination is a lack of confidence in one's abilities and no desire to complete assignments. This is the reason for choosing the self-instruction technique.

One approach that is starting to gain attention is self-instruction techniques, namely methods in which individuals are trained to give themselves verbal instructions as a way to direct their actions and manage their behavior. This technique is rooted in cognitive learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of mental processes in understanding and changing behavior. By using self-instruction, students are taught to recognize negative thoughts that encourage procrastination and replace them with positive and constructive statements that can motivate them to immediately start and complete academic assignments.

Self-instruction is one of the techniques in Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) developed by Meichenbaum which is an approach as an integration of cognitive and behavioral methods (Widodo & Santoso, 2023). According to Meichenbaum (in Corey, 2013), self-instruction techniques are cognitive reconstructions that focus on individual awareness to make changes to self-verbalization. Self-instruction techniques can help someone make positive sentences to reduce academic procrastination behavior by involving cognitive control. Cognitive control is the cognitive process that allows individuals the ability to process or manage information by interpreting, assessing, or connecting an event in a cognitive framework (Widyastari et al., 2020).

Miltenberg (in Nufi et al., 2021), states that in self-instruction procedures, individuals are taught how to give self-instruction at the right time by self-instructions. Through self-instruction, individuals are taught to provide self-instruction on their behavioral stimulus so that it can have an impact on the desired behavior change (Miltenberger, 2012). The purpose of the self-instruction technique in this research is to help students realize and understand what has been felt and thought so far which is the cause of the emergence of academic procrastination.

Based on previous research conducted by Asri and Kadafi (2020) highlights the importance of self-instruction in fostering better self-regulation and motivation among students, which is crucial for reducing academic procrastination in mathematics learning. The same thing was also done by Chusna and Nursalim (2019). The results of implementing the self-instruction technique of group counseling showed that this intervention effectively reduced the academic procrastination of class VIII students at SMP Muhammadiyah 9 Surabaya. Data analysis reveals a Z value of -2.214 and an Asymp value of—Sig. (1-tailed) of 0.021. With an  $\alpha$  (significance level) of 5%, we obtained  $0.021 < 0.05$ , which means that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. This shows that the application of self-instruction group counseling techniques can significantly reduce academic procrastination in these students. Apart from that, this research also provides suggestions for school counselors to apply this technique in guidance and counseling services, especially for students who have a high level of academic procrastination. Other research conducted by Saputra et al. (2017) Overall, this research concluded that group counseling using self-instruction and cognitive restructuring techniques was effective in reducing students' academic procrastination behavior, with cognitive restructuring techniques being superior in terms of effectiveness. The results of this research are also confirmed by Saputra and Lidyawati (2019) The results showed a significant decrease in academic procrastination behavior in the self-instruction group, with pretest and posttest scores demonstrating a statistically significant difference (t-value 0.004) compared to the control group, which exhibited an increase in procrastination behavior. In addition, according to research by Saputra and Lidyawati (2019), the self-instruction technique effectively reduces academic procrastination behavior. Self-instruction is a procedure designed to improve self-control independently through verbal statements to encourage, guide, and also maintain no verbal action. From the various things that have been described, it can be seen that the self-instruction technique is one of the solutions that can be used as a solution to procrastination behavior, especially among students.

Meanwhile, according to Nufi et al. (2021), who focus on Self Instruction guidelines for reducing academic procrastination for junior high school students, they said that the training guide developed in this research includes the contents of the training guide adapted to meet the specific needs of counselors, ensuring its relevance and application in real-world situations. Thus, providing clear, detailed, and directed implementation steps and procedures, so that they are easy for counselors to use. Each session in the training guide is equipped with an evaluation and reflection sheet for students, which helps assess mastery of the skills taught. This guide consists of nine parts, including an introduction, material on academic delays and independent learning, implementation steps, and appendices along with research instruments. Additionally, the Guide uses a structured learning approach to facilitate independent teaching, which is based on previous research showing

its effectiveness in reducing academic procrastination. It has gone through validation by experts in the field of guidance and counseling as well as learning media, so its quality and effectiveness are guaranteed.

The originality of this research lies in the application of the Self-Instruction Technique which is specifically focused on students in Central Java, Indonesia. Although the Self-Instruction Technique has been widely researched in the context of psychology and education, this research focuses on the specific context of a particular geographic and cultural region, namely Central Java. This provides added value because of the differences in cultural characteristics, educational environment, and student behavior patterns which may be different compared to students in other regions or other countries.

This research also tries to empirically explore and measure the effectiveness of Self-Instruction Technique in reducing academic procrastination, which has not been widely done in Indonesia, especially among students. Thus, this research provides a new contribution to the understanding and application of this technique in a specific local context. Based on the description above, the hypothesis proposed in this research is “there is an effect of the Self-Instruction technique on student Academic Procrastination”.

## **METHOD**

This research used a quantitative experimental method with a one-group pretest-posttest design model. The data collection method uses the academic procrastination scale based on the aspects of academic procrastination proposed by Steel (2007), namely Perceived time, Intention-action gap, Emotional distress, and Perceived ability. The independent variable in this research is the Self-Instruction technique, while the dependent variable is academic procrastination. Before the research was conducted, the researcher selected subjects using a scale so that the research subjects were twenty (20) students who showed high academic procrastination scores based on the academic procrastination scale and were willing to become research subjects. Then, measurements in research using a scale were carried out twice, namely before the treatment/intervention was given (pre-test) and after the treatment/intervention (post-test) in the form of self-instruction techniques on subjects with the same measuring instrument.

The intervention provided was in the form of self-instruction technique training, carried out in 1 meeting with 6 sessions. The first session begins with an introductory session, an explanation of the procedure for carrying out the intervention and the purpose of the intervention, and a pretest is given to determine the initial condition of the student's level of academic procrastination. This is intended so that the facilitator and participants get to know each other so that the intervention runs smoothly. The second session lasted 30 minutes, where the facilitator briefly explained the self-instruction technique and continued by giving instructions for the participants to follow regarding what the facilitator said out loud. This aims to facilitate participants to be the little express themselves. Then, in the third session, which lasted 20 minutes, participants were asked to write down their negative assumptions about themselves, replace them with positive words, and then read them aloud and repeatedly. The goal is to change a negative perspective to a more positive one about themselves. Then, in the fourth session, participants were asked to identify what needs to be done to realize positive assumptions about themselves. Furthermore, in the fifth session, participants will get used to carrying out instructions in secret and be able to carry out appropriate behavior so that when negative behavior occurs, in this case, procrastination, participants can prevent and stop it by carrying out instructions on themselves. The last session was closing, participants were asked to review the interventions that had been carried out by writing down evaluations and related impressions and messages from the intervention process that had been carried out.

## Intervention Procedures

**Table 1. Self-Instruction Intervention Procedures**

Session	Session Sequence	Objective	Activity Method	Duration
1	Introduction	The facilitator introduces the participants	The facilitator introduces himself	5'
	Training Contract	Create and agree on training contracts	Discussion Displays PPT	5'
	Training Objectives	Participants have an overview of the contents of the training and the benefits to be obtained		5'
2	Imitate Me	Give a little explanation regarding self-instruction	The facilitator displays presentation material and briefly explains self-instruction	15'
		As a way for media in student self-expression	The facilitator demonstrates self-instruction aloud.	15'
3	I can	Changing negative assumptions about self into positive assumptions	Write down negative assumptions and replace them with positive assumptions  Read positive assumptions and repeat them 3 times out loud	10' 10'
		Identifying things that need to be done to realize positive assumptions about himself	Arrange steps and stages that will be carried out in the next week	15'
5	My commitment	a. Strengthening targets, steps, and stages that will be carried out by participants  b. Participants will get used to carrying out hidden instructions and be able to perform the appropriate behavior	▪ Repeat what will be done ▪ Make a wish tree ▪ Paste it in an easy-to-see place. ▪ Read aloud every time you see a wishing tree.	15'
6	Closing	a. Participants can review what has been carried out  b. Participants can get used to carrying out instructions on their own  c. Participants can do the right behavior	▪ Participants share what they have learned during the training ▪ Fill out the Post-test posttest ▪ Gift-giving ▪ Providing Motivational ▪ Words & Closing Greetings ▪ Group photo	25'

\*minute (')

Analysis of hypothesis testing in this research used the T-test with the help of SPSS version 22 for Windows because the data in this research were parametric. Use of the Paired sample t-test to compare two measurements in one group. The Paired Sample t-test will analyze the pre-test and post-test scores in this analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 2. Descriptive Test**

	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	20	80.40	2.927	75	88
Post-test		58.10	5.300	46	69

Based on the results of the descriptive test in Table 2, it can be seen that the subjects of this research consisted of 20 students. The minimum value on the pre-test is 75 the maximum value is 88, and the standard deviation is 2,927. The minimum score on the post-test is 46 the maximum value is 69, and the standard deviation is 5,300.

**Table 3. Normality Test**

	Pre-test	Post-test
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	0.914	0.653
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.374	0.788

Based on the results of the normality test on the pre-test academic procrastination variable in this research, a p-value of 0.374 ( $p>0.05$ ) was obtained with a K-SZ of 0.914. This proves that the pre-test academic procrastination variable items are normally distributed. Then, the results of the normality test on the post-test academic procrastination variable in this research obtained a p-value of 0.788 ( $p> 0.05$ ) with a K-SZ of 0.653. This proves that the post-test academic procrastination variable items are also normally distributed.

**Table 4. Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	80.40	20	75	88
Post-test	58.10	20	46	69

Based on the results of paired samples statistics, the average pretest score was 80.40 and the posttest average was 58.10 with 20 students as respondents. While the Standard deviation value at the pretest was 2,927 and the Standard deviation value at the posttest was 1,185. The error Mean at the pretest is 655 and the post-test is 1.185. Because the average value of pretest academic procrastination is  $80.40 > \text{post-test } 58.10$ , it can be interpreted that there is a difference in average academic procrastination between the pretest and post-test descriptively.

**Table 5. Paired Samples Correlations**

Paired Differences						
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-test	20	80.40	2.927	75	88	

Based on the results of the Paired T-Test above, shows information about the Mean Paired Differences value of 22,300. Other information related to the table above is that it is known that the t count is worth 14,299 then the T table is searched based on the df value and the significance value of  $\alpha/2$ . From the output above, it is known that the df value is 19 and the significance value is  $.05/2$  equal to .025, so the t table of the output is 2.093. Thus, because the value of t count is  $14,299 > \text{t table is } 2,093$ , it is known that the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected  $H_a$  is accepted. So it can be concluded that there is an effect of using self-instruction techniques in reducing student academic procrastination.

## Discussion

Many students fail to achieve anything in their studies because of procrastination. This is because they prefer to spend a lot of time doing unnecessary things. They should be reading books to gain knowledge, but they are tempted to concentrate on irrelevant things. This contributes to their poor academic performance in their studies. Therefore, this causes many students to struggle to complete their studies every year in university. Therefore, students need to avoid procrastination so that they will have plenty of time for their studies. Wulan and Abdullah (2014) said that students who are not prepared to face assignments will experience problems related to assignments and will need more time. Low awareness that each person's time and schedule are different is a character that cannot be justified. Taking things for granted can make someone not appreciate everything, especially Tim (Parhan et al., 2022). Procrastination is caused by laziness which hurts the individual and the internet is one of the most popular activities today. So there needs to be an intervention that helps individuals direct their thoughts and actions through the use of verbal or mental instructions.

Research shows that self-directed study techniques can significantly reduce the rate of academic procrastination among college students. Students who take self-study training programs tend to report improvements in time management, increased internal motivation, and a better ability to break down large tasks into smaller, more manageable steps. This not only helps them to start tasks early but also complete them on time. The effectiveness of this technique is attributed to its ability to change a student's mindset from "I'll do it later" to "I need to start now." Independent study techniques are an effective method for reducing academic procrastination among students. Academic procrastination, or postponing academic assignments, is often a significant problem for students, hindering academic performance and causing stress and anxiety. Self-directed learning techniques involve the use of positive, structured internal dialogue to help individuals direct and regulate their actions. In an academic context, these techniques can help students detail the steps necessary to complete a task, provide a motivational boost, students become more aware of the thought patterns and habits that lead to procrastination and monitor their progress regularly and can therefore overcome them by more effective.

Based on the results of data analysis, the calculated *t* value is  $14.299 > t$  table of 2.093, so it is known that the *Sig. (2-tailed)* value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_a$  is accepted. So it can be concluded that there is an influence of the use of self-instruction techniques in reducing student academic procrastination. This is based on the results of research conducted by Saputra et al. (2017), which shows that the self-instruction technique of group counseling has proven effective in reducing students' academic procrastination behavior. This is the reason for choosing the self-instruction technique because the conclusion of this technique is to rebuild the client's cognitive system but is centered on the overt verbalization pattern (voiced out loud) and covert (voiced in the heart). So, the self-instruction technique is a technique used to train students to instruct themselves from negative statements to positive statements (Chusna & Nursalim, 2019).

According to Takiuddin and Husnu (2021) focusing on achieving goals and being persistent when working can make someone successful in completing tasks. This is reinforced by Weisskirch (2018) opinion that cumulatively, the ability to know their performance can impact their overall academic performance. Self-instruction techniques are considered to be able to improve academic procrastination because they increase students' self-confidence and motivation in completing tasks so that they have better self-regulation skills. In addition, time management techniques are also observed to be able to reduce academic procrastination because they allow students to monitor themselves in managing their time to complete and submit tasks according to deadlines. In other words, these two techniques improve students' self-regulation so that they are expected to be able to reduce academic procrastination in mathematics learning (Martin & Pear, 2015).

Self-instruction also helps students overcome feelings of anxiety and stress that often trigger procrastination. By adopting a positive internal dialogue, students can reduce their anxiety levels related to academic tasks and increase their self-confidence. For example, instead of feeling intimidated by a large and complex task, students are taught to break it down into smaller, more manageable parts and give themselves praise after completing each part. This technique not only helps reduce procrastination but also improves the quality of work output and self-satisfaction. This statement is reinforced by the opinion of Asri and Kadafi (2020) who stated that group counseling with a CBT approach using independent learning techniques and time management is one effort to reduce academic procrastination. The results of their study also showed that group counseling with self-instruction and time management techniques was effective in reducing academic procrastination in mathematics learning. Furthermore, group counseling with self-instruction techniques was more effective in reducing academic procrastination compared to time management techniques.

The effectiveness of self-instruction techniques in reducing academic procrastination is seen in the improvement of time management and the decrease in stress levels experienced by students. By using this technique, students are trained to replace negative thoughts and self-sabotage with positive statements and clear instructions. These results are also supported by Ojo (2019) who stated that procrastination is not a problem in

time management but rather a difficulty in self-regulation. Through this self-instruction method of training, students understand that they can order themselves to do positive things whenever and wherever they need to. This is supported by the statement that self-instruction techniques are appropriate for dealing with emotional and behavioral problems because self-instruction is designed to provide individuals with problem-solving strategies that can be applied to their behavior.

Self-instruction techniques allow students to control problems by giving instructions (Bryant & Budd, 1982). In addition, research by Hidayah et al. (2023) also shows that self-instruction can also increase self-confidence, performance in responding to academic tasks and facing problems, handling problems, based on phenomena that occur in schools and then changing the way they behave. Based on the results achieved, it can be concluded that providing self-instruction techniques can reduce the academic procrastination of students in Central Java. The results of this study support the findings of previous studies, that self-instruction techniques have been proven to contribute positively to reducing academic procrastination behavior (Saputra et al., 2017; Asri & Kadafi, 2020; Sari et al., 2022; Nufi et al., 2021) The effectiveness of self-instruction techniques in reducing academic procrastination is also supported by various empirical studies. These studies found that students who were trained to use this technique showed a significant decrease in procrastination levels compared to a control group that did not receive similar interventions. This suggests that self-instruction can be a useful and practical tool for students to manage their time more effectively and achieve their academic goals. In the long run, mastering this technique can help students not only in academic contexts, but also in various aspects of their lives that require discipline and good time management. Consistent use of self-instruction techniques can help students build productive habits and increase self-efficacy, which in turn can reduce the tendency to procrastinate on academic tasks. Research also indicates that students who use these techniques regularly tend to complete their assignments on time and with better quality.

This research contributes to the development of a psychological approach in overcoming the problem of academic procrastination among students, especially in Indonesia. The research results can be a reference for educational practitioners and psychologists in developing self-instruction-based interventions. In addition, this study opens up opportunities for the development of more varied and adaptive self-instruction techniques according to individual characteristics and types of academic tasks. Further research could explore combining this technique with other methods, such as time management or self-management. Another implication is a deeper understanding of how local cultural factors influence the effectiveness of self-instruction techniques in higher education contexts. This research could encourage cross-cultural studies to see whether the same results hold in different cultural contexts. Educational institutions can utilize the findings of this research to develop guidance and counseling programs that are more effective in reducing academic procrastination. This could involve systematic self-instruction training for students. The findings of this research can become the basis for further, more comprehensive research, both in terms of methodology, population and variables studied, so as to strengthen empirical evidence about the effectiveness of self-instruction techniques in various contexts.

This study has limitations in the sample and also the duration of the intervention. This research was only conducted on students in Central Java, Indonesia. This may limit the generalization of the findings to student populations in other regions or countries with different cultural characteristics and educational systems. The intervention was carried out over a relatively short period of time, so the research results do not reflect the long-term effects of using self-instruction techniques. The long-term effectiveness of this technique still needs to be further explored.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of providing self-instruction technique training in reducing academic procrastination behavior in students. This means the hypothesis proposed in this research is accepted. As scientific research in the form of

research into academic procrastination in students, the conclusions drawn have implications and suggestions for participants, who are expected to be able to apply the self-instruction technique methods that have been provided so that academic procrastination can be minimized. Meanwhile, campuses can make this training applicable to all other students who have not received training. for future researchers, can review the results of this research and development so that in the future, academic procrastination behavior can be avoided.

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