

***SELF-TALK AND THOUGHT STOPPING* GROUP COUNSELING EFFECTIVENESS TO REDUCE ACADEMIC ANXIETY IN STUDENTS WITH THE BROKEN HOME FAMILY**

Rizki Diana Putri

Post Graduate State University of Semarang
INDONESIA

Mungin Eddy Wibowo

State University of Semarang
INDONESIA

Muhammad Japar

Muhammadiyah University of Magelang
INDONESIA

ABSTRACT

Students with broken home family who do not gain enough attention and support from their parents are vulnerable to various kinds of pressures. One of which is in academic matters such as having to achieve academic targets, grades, and results that are out of reach for them. These pressures cause serious problems, namely, academic anxiety. This problem has an impact on motivation, encourages students to commit cheating such as plagiarism. The cheating was done to ease their perceived anxiety. Furthermore, to reduce the academic anxiety, efforts are being made, namely, providing *group counseling services for self-talk and thought stopping* techniques. The purpose of this study was to test the effectiveness of group counseling services with self-talk and thought stopping techniques in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home family. This study used an experimental *repeated measure design*. The research subjects in this study involved 14 students who were selected by purposive sampling from 91 students with broken home family at State Junior High School 6 Metro. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique. It was based on the criteria of academic anxiety obtained from the results of the academic anxiety scale score. The instrument was adapted from the *Academic Anxiety Questionnaire*. The Sphericity and ANOVA tests were used as data analysis technique. Based on the results of statistical tests, it showed that group counseling of self-talk and thought stopping techniques are effective in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home family at State Junior High School 6 Metro ($F_1 = 411.32, p < 0.01$). This is based on the significant changes shown by each given technique. In addition, the comparison of the level of group effectiveness states that self-talk group counseling is more effective than thought stopping techniques to reduce academic anxiety of students with broken home family ($F_3 = 9,889, p = 0.008 < 0.05$).

Keywords: Self talk, thought stopping, academic anxiety.

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Anxiety is a quite dangerous problem for people who are lacking in responding to their self-defense. Individuals who are easily distracted in carrying out their activities, imply that their anxiety falls into the abnormal category and needs to be addressed immediately. Therefore, anxiety can be defined as a feeling of excessive anxiousness, potentially threatening development, change, and hindering new experiences in finding self-identity and meaning in life (Rimonda et al., 2020).

One type of anxiety is neurotic anxiety, which develops based on experiences obtained in childhood, related to punishment and threats from parents and other people who have the authority (Feist, 2017). Academic anxiety is part of the neurotic anxiety that is often experienced by adolescents. The causes are various, one of which is the impact of family

relationships that have a role on academic performance (Hetherington, 1989). Home tensions, family strife or instability, produce an emotionally barren atmosphere at home and result in conflict between family members, frequent quarrels and family disputes. The gradual development of these problems directly affects the emotions of growing children, especially young adolescents and it could interfere with children's concentration and learning abilities at school, thus, a child who comes from a broken home can seriously affect his academic performance.

With regard to anxiety, children with broken home families have more social, academic and emotional problems (Schultz, 2006), problems at school, such as relationships with teachers, homework, and attention at school (Manning & Lamb, 2003), indicating depression. (Umar, 2019). Damages in the family can destroy a child's mentality, among which the destruction is the child's way of managing feelings of anxiety (Garawiyani, 2002). Children who consider their parents warm, assertive, and involved in their education get better performance than students with parents who are not involved (Lester et al., 2017). Students with broken home families who do not get attention and support from their parents are more susceptible to various kinds of pressures, one of which is in academic matters such as having to achieve achievement targets, grades, and results that surely out of reach for them. This pressure causes a more serious problem, namely academic anxiety.

Academic anxiety is a feeling of excessive anxiousness caused by a condition in which it is full of demands for various academic tasks (Chin et al., 2017), the demands of completing school assignments, presenting class projects, and facing tests can cause anxiety (Schry et al., 2014). Students who experience academic anxiety feel helpless, often feel depressed, and have difficulty concentrating, not infrequently someone with academic anxiety feels tremendous tension which results in difficulty thinking (Halgin & Whitbourne, 2006), and affected on inhibiting academic development to be optimal (King & Ollendick, 2005).

The academic anxiety profiles of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro was obtained from distribution of academic anxiety scales, using *The Akademikx Anxiety Inventory* and being followed by 27 students, it was found that 3 students or 11.11% were in the low academic anxiety category, 8 students or 29.63% in the medium category, and 16 students or 59.25% in the high category. Students who experience academic anxiety, show symptoms such as: (1) fear of all things academic; (2) predict failure of the results even though the test has not been carried out; (3) belief in the inability to complete academic assignments; (4) worrying and gaining tension in learning activities; (5) committing academic fraud such as plagiarism; (6) trembling or cold sweating while discussing (7) fear of embarrassing oneself, resulting in avoiding any situation that can trigger that fear, (8) having negative thoughts about parental evaluations related to academic results (9) tense in front of classmates and teachers (10) having difficulty speaking.

Seeing the problems of students above, group counseling can be used as a means to help students achieve development, as well as being one of the helps to overcome academic anxiety problems. Group counseling helps members see how their beliefs affect how they feel and what they do (Corey, 2011). Based on Mahfud's (2017) research, group counseling has a direct impact on the tolerance of academic distress. Therefore, the techniques recommended in group counseling are self talk and thought stopping.

The self-talk technique has advantages that can be seen in studies of several previous studies. Self-talk techniques help to control anxiety and stress that affect performance in completing

tasks (Bellinger et al., 2015), to complete tasks that are difficult to do (Galanis et al., 2018), increase self-confidence and reduce cognitive anxiety (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2009), and to focus on positive rather than negative things and to strengthen their coping skills (Erford, 2016), and effectively reduce the level of academic anxiety of students (Zulaifi et al., 2017). Furthermore, other studies using thought stopping techniques help get rid of any unwanted thoughts as early as possible (Bakker, 2009), minimize anxiety about academic evaluations (Dewi et al., 2015), and reduce stress levels in various situations (Naikare et al., 2015).

Based on the explanation and previous research literatures, self talk and thought stopping techniques are feasible to be effective in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families at SMPN 6 Metro. The reason for this assumption is because the two techniques can be rebuilt and examined thought patterns (attitudes, assumptions and beliefs), decide what is useful and what is not useful for individuals, easy to do, efficient, and can be done at any time and involves the independence and participation as a whole so as to be able to provide the desired hope. In this study, the focus of the problem is academic anxiety, because students with broken home families are vulnerable to various kinds of pressures that cause anxiety problems. The selection of self-talk and thought stopping techniques emerged from several previous studies that provided ideas and facts that academic anxiety can be overcome. Thereby helping students control their thoughts, behavior and thinking realistically and automatically, resulting to students who are able to act, feel, and be able to deal with situations that trigger academic anxiety. In general, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of group counseling with self-talk and thought stopping techniques to reduce academic anxiety of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro.

METHODOLOGY

This experimental research used repeated measures design. This research was conducted with three measurements (*Pretest, Posttest, Follow Up*). The pretest, in the form of providing data collection instruments (*academic anxiety scale*), was carried out to determine the initial view of students' academic anxiety levels before being given the treatments. Meanwhile, the treatment provided is group counseling with self-talk and thought stopping techniques, each of which consists of 6 meetings, with a frequency of one to two meetings a week, and a duration of 90 minutes per meeting. Posttest is the delivering of data collection instruments that are given after the treatment. Then Follow Up in the form of giving back the data collection instrument after being given treatment and carried out some time after being given the posttest. The subjects were chosen using purposive sampling technique.

The subjects in this study were students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro who were identified as having academic anxiety problems. The research subjects used in this study were 14 people, with two experimental groups, each consisting of 7 people. Experimental group A was given the treatment in the form of self-talk technique group counseling and experimental group B was given the thought stopping technique group counseling treatment. After treatment, the researcher gave a posttest to the experimental group. The posttest was given to determine the difference in the results from the previous treatment. Two weeks after the posttest was given, researchers provided a follow-up to see to what extent the students maintained their changes in thought patterns and behavior.

The data collection techniques used in this study is an academic anxiety scale (*Academic Anxiety Questionnaire*; Sarason & Sarason, 1990). The data were analyzed using the *Sphericity* and *ANOVA* test to examine the hypothesis.

RESULTS

The participants who took part in this activity were 91 students. Subjects in this study were taken non-randomly, based on the criteria of students from broken broken homes, by providing a scale of academic anxiety (Academic Anxiety Questionnaire, Sarason & Sarason, 1990). The scores on the academic anxiety scale are grouped into three categories, namely low, medium and high. The following is a presentation of the initial conditions of students' academic anxiety at State Junior High School 6 Metro:

Table 1. Academic Anxiety Categories of Ninth graders of State Junior High School 6 Metro

Score range	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
> 69	High	46	50,54%
43 – 69	Medium	31	34, 07%
< 43	Low	14	15,38%
Total		91	100 %

Based on the information in the table above, students with broken home families experienced many academic anxiety problems. A total of 46 students with a percentage of 50.54% fall into the high category; 31 students with a percentage of 34, 07%, medium category and 14 students with a percentage of 15.38% low category. Furthermore, students who experience high and moderate category academic anxiety will be the subject of this research. Of the 77 students, using purposive sampling only 14 students were taken. The selected subjects were divided into two groups to be given treatment for counseling services, groups of self-talk and thought stopping techniques, each group consisting of 7 students.

Hypothesis testing to test H_a in this study uses the Sphericity and ANOVA test analysis techniques. The sphericity test was used to determine the mean or mean difference between the pretest, posttest and follow-up results in each group. Furthermore, the ANOVA test was used to determine the difference in effectiveness between the group counseling service with the self-talk technique and thought stopping.

The collected data (pretest, posttest, follow up) was tabulated and prepared before being analyzed. The average academic anxiety condition of students with broken home families before getting the treatment was at a high level. After getting treatment, the academic anxiety level of students decreased to a low level.

Based on the results of the Repeated Measures Design test, the entire group got a score ($F(2,21) = 411.325$, $p < 0.01$) which can be seen in **table 4**. The pretest results showed average level of students' academic anxiety were included in the high criteria ($M = 78.57$, $SD = 2,590$). After being given treatment in the form of group counseling with self-talk technique, the posttest and the follow-up results successively decrease the students' academic anxiety to a low category (posttest, $M = 41.71$, $SD = 1.085$; and follow-up, $M = 32$, $SD = 1.272$). So the results of the analysis (**Table 2**) elaborated that group counseling of self-talk techniques is effective in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro ($F1 = 221,738$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 2. Repeated Measures Results of ANOVA ST test

Parameter	Pretest	Posttest	Follow Up
Mean	78.57	41.71	32
Std. Deviation	2.590	1.085	1.272
F1	221.738		

In the experimental group B, the treatment is in the form of thought stopping technique group counseling. The pretest results of the average level of academic anxiety of students were included in the high criteria ($M = 73.57$, $SD = 1.494$). Meanwhile, the results of the posttest, and the follow-up showed the students' social anxiety level decreased to moderate and low (posttest, $M = 53.42$, $SD = 3.795$; and follow-up, $M = 43.14$, $SD = 1.388$). So the results of the analysis (**Table 3**) proved that group counseling with thought stopping techniques is also effective in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro ($F_1 = 67.934$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 3. Repeated Measures ANOVA TS Results

Parameter	Pretest	Posttest	Follow Up
Mean	73,57	53,42	43,14
Std. Deviation	1.494	3.795	1.388
F1	67.934		

The results of the Mixed ANOVA test showed a significant difference in effectiveness between group counseling with self-talk techniques and thought stopping techniques in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families ($F_3 = 9,889$, $p < 0.05$). The results of the interaction test showed that there was a significant interaction between the group counseling of the self-talk technique and the group counseling of the thought stopping technique in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families during the measurement time ($F_4 = 23.202$, $p > 0.05$). The results of data calculation before and after as well as differences in the effectiveness of the counseling services for the self-talk technique group with the thought stopping technique are presented in the table 4.

Table 4. Repeated Measures ANOVA Test Results

Groups	F2	F3	F4
ST	411.325	9.889	23.202
TS			

Note: ST: Self-talk Technique Group; TS: The thought stopping technique group; F1: Anova test results in each group; F2: Results of the Repeated Measures Design Test for all groups; F3: Result of difference test between groups; F4: The results of the group interaction effect test between measurement times; * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$.

The results of group interaction test during the measurement time present that between the two techniques used, the self-talk technique is superior to the thought stopping technique because it provides more advantages in the first posttest and second posttest (follow up), this can be seen in Figure 1.

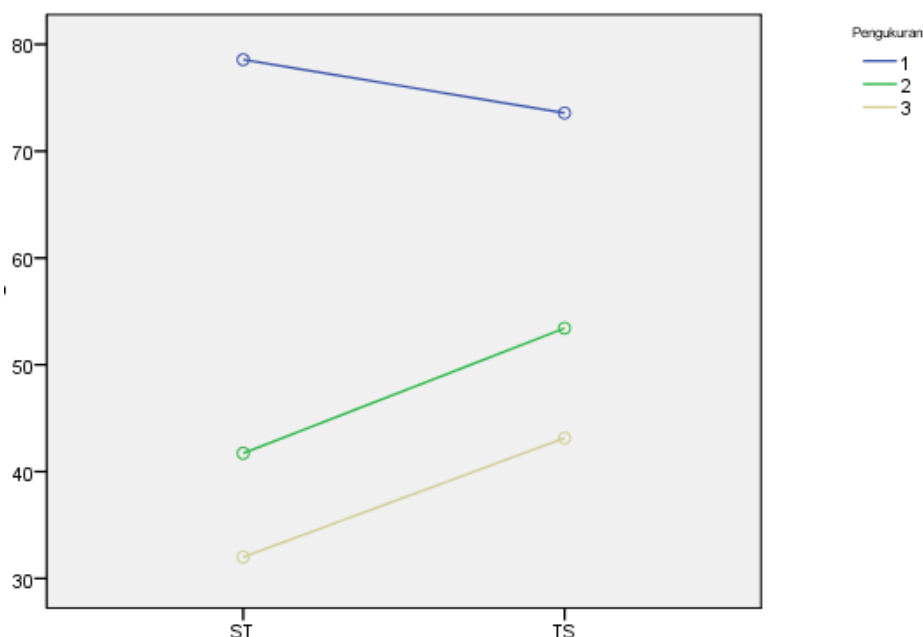


Figure 1. The Results of Group Interaction Test during the Measurement time

The results of the comparative analysis (pairwise) also showed the magnitude of the acquisition value on the measurement of the level of academic anxiety (**Table 5**). The magnitude of the value of the decrease in the level of academic anxiety using the group counseling technique of self-talk between pretest-posttest (MD = 36.857, SE = 2.623, $p < 0.05$). Then, at Pretest-Follow Up (MD = 46.571, SE = 2.328, $p < 0.05$). At Posttest – Follow Up (MD = 9.714, SE = 2.008, $p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Pairwise Comparisons ST Results

No.	Comparison	MD	SE	p
1.	Pretest–Posttest	36.857	2.623	<0.05
2.	Pretest-Follow Up	46.571	2.328	<0.05
3.	Posttest–Follow Up	9.714	2.008	<0.05

The results of the comparative analysis (pairwise) also showed the acquisition value on the measurement of the academic anxiety level (**Table 6**). The value of the decrease in the level of academic anxiety using the thought stopping technique group counseling (MD = 18.429, SE = 3.199, $p < 0.05$). Then, at Pretest-Follow Up (MD = 30.429, SE = 1.660, $p < 0.05$). At Posttest – Follow Up (MD = 12.000, SE = 2.786, $p < 0.05$).

Table 6. Pairwise Comparisons TS Results

No.	Comparison	MD	SE	p
1.	Pretest–Posttest	18.429	3.199	<0.05
2.	Pretest-Follow Up	30.429	1.660	<0.05
3.	Posttest–Follow Up	12.000	2.786	<0.05

Based on the statistical tests listed in tables 2 and 3, there are significant differences between before the intervention (pretest) and after the intervention (posttest and follow-up). It can be concluded that group counseling with self-talk and thought stopping techniques is effective in reducing the level of academic anxiety of students with broken home families. This means that self-talk and thought stopping techniques are effective in reducing the academic anxiety of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro. These findings indicate that group counseling with self-talk and thought stopping techniques can be a solution

for counseling teachers to help overcome students' academic anxiety problems, especially those with broken home families.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study are in accordance with the opinion of Latipun et al (2019), that group counseling helps individuals solving their problems and has a positive influence by increasing their self-understanding. Furthermore, according to Nelson-Jones (2015) group counseling improves personal skills, such as self-confidence and trust issues in others.

In the self-talk technique according to Hatzigeorgiadis et al (2009), it can increase self-confidence and reduce the cognitive anxiety. Furthermore, research conducted by Rimonda et al (2018) mentioned that self-talk techniques help challenge unreasonable beliefs, develop healthier thinking, and reduce anxiety levels, as well as help individuals focus on positive things and strengthen their coping skills (Erford, 2016).

In the thought stopping technique according to Kurniawan & Mulia (2018), it helps counselees who are bound by negative thoughts that they become unproductive, excessively anxious, and blame themselves. Furthermore, Videbeck (2010) stated in his research that thought stopping techniques helped individuals change their thinking processes. Meanwhile, according to Dewi et al (2015) the thought stopping technique minimizes individual anxiety who will face the academic evaluation, and effectively reduces the level of stress that triggers anxiety in various situations (Naikare et al., 2015).

Based on the findings, opinions and relevant research results, it can be concluded that self-talk and thought stopping techniques can be used by counselors in providing group counseling services to help students with broken home families to overcome their academic anxiety problems.

CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted to see the effectiveness of group counseling with self-talk and thought stopping techniques in reducing academic anxiety of students with broken home families at State Junior High School 6 Metro. The results proved that through group counseling, self-talk and thought stopping techniques, the academic anxiety were significantly effective in reduced. There is a difference in effectiveness between self-talk and thought stopping group counseling services.

Based on the results of this study, it is hoped that guidance and counseling teachers in schools can use self-talk and thought stopping techniques to overcome the problems of other students in general. Both of these techniques can also be done in different cultures and levels of education other than junior high school, for example, in elementary or high school.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this occasion, the deepest gratitude were delivered to: Prof. Dr. Fathur Rokhman, M.Hum as the Rector of Semarang State University; Prof. Dr. Agus Nuryatin, M.Hum, Director of the Postgraduate Program at Semarang State University; Dr. Awalya, M.Pd., Kons as Coordinator of the PPs UNNES Counseling Study Program; Prof. Dr. Mungin Eddy Wibowo, M.Pd., Kons

and Prof. Dr. Muhammad Jafar, M.Si., Kons as the Supervisor who has helped a lot in writing this research.

REFERENCES

- Bakker, G. M. (2009). In defence of thought stopping. *Clinical Psychologist*, 13(2), 59–68.
- Bellinger, D. B., DeCaro, M. S., & Ralston, P. A. S. (2015). Mindfulness, anxiety, and high-stakes mathematics performance in the laboratory and classroom. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 37, 123–132.
- Chin, E. C., Williams, M. W., Taylor, J. E., & Harvey, S. T. (2017). The influence of negative affect on test anxiety and academic performance: An examination of the tripartite model of emotions. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 54, 1-8.
- Corey, G. (2011). *Theory and practice of group counseling*. Nelson Education.
- Dewi, L. P. W., Suarni, N. K., & Putri, D. A. W. M. (2015). Penerapan Konseling Rasional Emotif Dengan Teknik Thought Stopping Untuk Meminimalisir Kecemasan Dalam Menghadapi Evaluasi Akademik Siswa Di Kelas X 7 Sma Negeri 1 Sawan Tahun Pelajaran 2014/2015. *Jurnal Ilmiah Bimbingan Konseling Undiksha*, 3(1).
- Erford, B. T. (2016). Teknik yang harus diketahui setiap konselor. *Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar*.
- Feist, G. J. (2017). *Personality, behavioral thresholds, and the creative scientist. The Cambridge handbook of creativity and personality research (p. 64–83)*.
- Galanis, E., Hatzigeorgiadis, A., Comoutos, N., Charachousi, F., & Sanchez, X. (2018). From the lab to the field: Effects of self-talk on task performance under distracting conditions. *The Sport Psychologist*, 32(1), 26-32.
- Garawiyani, B. (2002). Memahami Gejolak Emosi Anak. *Bogor: Cahaya*.
- Halgin, R. P., & Whitbourne, S. K. (2006). *Abnormal psychology*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Hatzigeorgiadis, A., Zourbanos, N., Mpoumpaki, S., & Theodorakis, Y. (2009). Mechanisms underlying the self-talk-performance relationship: The effects of motivational self-talk on self-confidence and anxiety. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 10(1), 186–192.
- King, N. J., Heyne, D., & Ollendick, T. H. (2005). Cognitive-Behavioral Treatments for Anxiety and Phobic Disorders in Children and Adolescents: A Review. *Behavioral Disorders*, 30(3), 241–257.
- Kurniawan, Y., & Mulia, P. H. (2018). The Effect of Thought Stopping Therapy on The Blood and Pulse Pressures as an Anxiety Indicator of Injections. In *3rd ASEAN Conference on Psychology, Counselling, and Humanities (ACPCH 2017)*. Atlantis Press.
- Latipun, L., Amalia, D. R., & Hasanati, N. (2019). Relation Social Support and Psychological Well-Being among Schizophrenic Patients: Self-Care as Mediation variable?. In *4th ASEAN Conference on Psychology, Counselling, and Humanities (ACPCH 2018)*. Atlantis Press.
- Lester, L., Pearce, N., Waters, S., Barnes, A., Beatty, S., & Cross, D. (2017). Family involvement in a whole-school bullying intervention: Mothers' and fathers' communication and influence with children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 26(10), 2716-2727.
- Mahfud, A, Muhammad J. & Sunawan. (2017). Dampak Konseling Kelompok Cognitive Behavior Therapy dengan Teknik Stress Inoculation Training terhadap Toleransi Distres Akademik melalui Hardiness. *Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling*, 6 (1) 94-100.
- Manning, W. D., & Lamb, K. A. (2003). Adolescent well-being in cohabiting, married, and single-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(4), 876–893.
- Naikare, V. R., Kale, P., Kanade, A. B., Mankar, S., Pund, S., & Khatake, S. (2015). Thought

- stopping activity as innovative trend to deal with stresses. *Journal of Psychiatric Nursing*, 4(2), 63.
- Nelson-Jones, R. (2015). *Basic counselling skills: a helper's manual*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Rimonda, R., Bulantika, S. Z., Latifah, H., & Khasanah, I. (2020). The Influence of Cinematherapy Against Academic Anxiety in Students. *Jurnal Inspirasi Pendidikan*, 10(1), 57-62. <https://doi.org/10.21067/jip.v10i1.4294>
- Rimonda, R., Wibowo, M. E., & Jafar, M. (2018). The Effectiveness of Group Counseling by Using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Approach with Cinematherapy and Self-talk Techniques to Reduce Social Anxiety at SMK N 2 Semarang. *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling*, 7(2), 145–152.
- Schry, A. R., Norberg, M. M., Maddox, B. B., & White, S. W. (2014). Gender Matters: The Relationship Between Social Anxiety and Alcohol-Related Consequences. *PloS One*, 9(12), e115361.
- Schultz, G. (2006). Broken family structure leads to Educational Difficulties for children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 27(3), 70–80.
- Umar, U. S. (2019). Influence of Broken Homes on Senior Secondary School Students' Academic, Emotional and Social Adjustments in Katsina State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Psychology & Social Development* 7(1):26-32.
- Videbeck, S. L. (2010). *Psychiatric-mental health nursing*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Zulaifi, R., Wibowo, ME., Awalya. (2017). “Keefektifan Konseling Kelompok Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Dengan Teknik Self-Talk dan Thought Stopping Terhadap Tingkat Kecemasan sosial Peserta didik”. *Tesis tidak dipublikasi*. Semarang: Program Pascasarjana UNNES