



## Implementation of Mindfulness Techniques Through Group Counseling Services to Reduce Stress Disorders in Final Year Guidance and Counseling Students

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### ABSTRACT

Final year students often experience academic stress caused by the pressure of completing their thesis, dynamics in the guidance process with lecturers, repeated revisions, and demands to graduate within a certain time frame. This pressure often has an impact on psychological disorders such as anxiety, mental fatigue, and even decreased academic motivation. Therefore, an appropriate intervention approach is needed to help students manage stress in a healthy way. One approach that has proven effective is the mindfulness technique, which is the practice of full awareness of current experiences without negative judgment. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the mindfulness technique applied in group counseling services on reducing the level of academic stress in final year students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program. This study used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design of one group pretest-posttest design. The sample consisted of 7 students selected by purposive sampling with criteria of moderate to high stress levels. The instrument used was an academic stress scale compiled based on three aspects, namely biological and psychological. The intervention was carried out through three mindfulness-based group counseling sessions which included conscious breathing exercises, the STOP technique, awareness of thoughts and emotions, and group reflection. using paired sample t-test showed a value of  $t = 3.894$  with a significance of  $p = 0.008$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. The average academic stress score decreased from 87.60 to 64.71, indicating that the intervention had a significant positive effect. Thus, it can be concluded that mindfulness-based group counseling services are effective in reducing academic stress levels, strengthening emotional regulation, and supporting the psychological well-being of final year students during the completion of their studies.

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## INTRODUCTION

Students are individuals who are in a transition period towards maturity, both academically and psychologically. In this phase, students are required to complete various academic responsibilities within a limited time, especially final year students who are at the stage of preparing their final assignment or thesis. This academic pressure makes students vulnerable to stress. Academic stress is a psychological reaction that arises in response to academic demands that exceed an individual's ability to deal with them.

According to (Wahyuni & Setyawati, 2020) One of the main causes of stress in students is the inability to complete academic tasks, especially theses, on time. In addition, the dynamics of ineffective academic guidance with supervisors also worsen the psychological condition of students. Fear of delays, confusion in determining research topics, and pressure to graduate quickly are the main triggers for increased stress in final year students. Stress that is not handled properly has a negative impact on academic performance, mental well-being, and even leads to more serious psychological disorders, such as anxiety and depression.

According to (Sarafino, 2018) Academic stress is an individual's response to conditions or situations that are considered stressful, originating from teaching and learning activities or other aspects related to the academic world. This stress arises when there is a mismatch between the conditions that an individual expects and their biological, psychological, or social system.

Stress management can be done through pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches. One non-pharmacological approach that has proven effective is the mindfulness technique. According to Kabat-Zinn, mindfulness is an awareness that arises through deliberate attention, in the present moment, without judgment. This technique emphasizes accepting the experience as a whole and being aware of one's existence in the present. (Dhamayanti & Yudiarso, 2020) states that mindfulness therapy is effective in reducing anxiety, stress, and improving emotional regulation. In addition, mindfulness also contributes to increasing self-efficacy, psychological well-being, and mental resilience. (Amalia Zulfa, Febby Fariska, Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, & Dewi Khurun Aini, 2024).

One of the effective media in implementing mindfulness is through group counseling services. (Wang & Sheibani, 2024) affirms that group counseling can improve students' psychological well-being through the process of sharing experiences, empathy, and reflection together in a safe environment. The integration of mindfulness techniques and group counseling services provides a holistic and structured approach. In group counseling sessions, students can

learn and practice mindfulness to manage the academic stress they experience. This approach allows students to develop adaptive coping skills, sharpen self-awareness, and build mental resilience in facing various academic and personal challenges.

Research by (Ultimate, 2021) showed that mobile application-based mindfulness intervention conducted for less than 30 days with a frequency of three times a week was consistently able to significantly reduce students' stress levels ( $p = 0.008$ ). This study emphasizes that technology-based therapy can be an effective solution in dealing with stress among students. Meanwhile (Liin & Hadi, 2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study with a pre- and post-test with control group design on 40 students of the YKY Yogyakarta Nursing Academy for 35 days. The results showed a significant decrease in stress levels in the group using the GFR mindfulness application, both in male and female students. These two studies confirm that the use of mindfulness applications is effective in reducing stress in students.

Stress among college students has been widely studied. Interventions such as mindfulness, meditation, relaxation, and yoga using mobile applications are the most attractive options for reducing stress. Technology is used as a medium to assist in the implementation of interventions including mindfulness mobile applications. The search was limited from 2008 to 2018 with full-text and English language papers. Results: Four literatures were found that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Three themes were identified: mindfulness applications, application usage frameworks, and measuring stress levels. Conclusions: This review expands the knowledge in the field of stress reduction using mindfulness mobile applications and calls for further research. Researchers should develop applications that use mindfulness as a therapy to reduce stress levels in college students. Institutions or universities should utilize the findings of this review to promote mindfulness training in managing stressors or reducing stress through mobile applications. (Ningsih et al., 2018).

However, until now, there is still little research that explicitly explores the effectiveness of applying mindfulness in group counseling services in guidance and counseling environments, especially for final year students. In fact, the need for appropriate and empirically based psychological services is increasingly urgent as cases of academic stress increase among students.

Based on the description above, this study aims to determine the extent to which the application of mindfulness techniques through group counseling services can relieve stress disorders in final year students. The results of this study are expected to provide significant contributions to the development of counseling services in higher education institutions, as well as being a practical

reference for counselors in helping students face academic challenges effectively.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In the Method section, you explain clearly how you conducted your research order to: (1) enable readers to evaluate the work performed and (2) permit others to replicate your research. You must describe exactly what you did: what and how experiments were run, what, how much, how often, where, when, and why equipment and materials were used. The main consideration is to ensure that enough detail is provided to verify your findings and to enable the replication of the research. You should maintain a balance between brevity (you cannot describe every technical issue) and completeness (you need to give adequate detail so that readers know what happened).

This study uses a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design of the One Group Pretest-Posttest Design type.(Unaradjan, 2019). This design is used to measure the effectiveness of the application of mindfulness techniques through group counseling services in reducing academic stress in final year students.

**Table 1.**  
**One Group Pre-Test and Post-Test Design**

| Pre-Test | Intervention | Post-Test |
|----------|--------------|-----------|
| O1       | X            | O2        |

Information:

O1 = Pre-test value, measures the initial condition of the group before being given the intervention.

X = Intervention or treatment given to the research group.

O2 = Post-test value, measuring the condition of the group after the intervention is given.

The population in this study were final year Guidance and Counseling Study Program students who were in the process of writing their theses.

**Table 2.**  
**Number of Research Population**

| No. | Student Generation | Number of Students |
|-----|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1   | 2021               | 67                 |

The sampling technique was carried out using the purposive sampling method, by selecting subjects based on certain criteria that are in accordance with the research objectives. The criteria set include: (1) active final year

students, (2) currently compiling a final assignment (thesis), and (3) having a moderate to high level of academic stress based on the pretest results. From a total of 67 final year students, the researcher took 10% of the number who met the criteria as research samples.

The pretest and posttest data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the average value, standard deviation, and data distribution of academic stress scores of final year students before and after participating in mindfulness-based group counseling services.

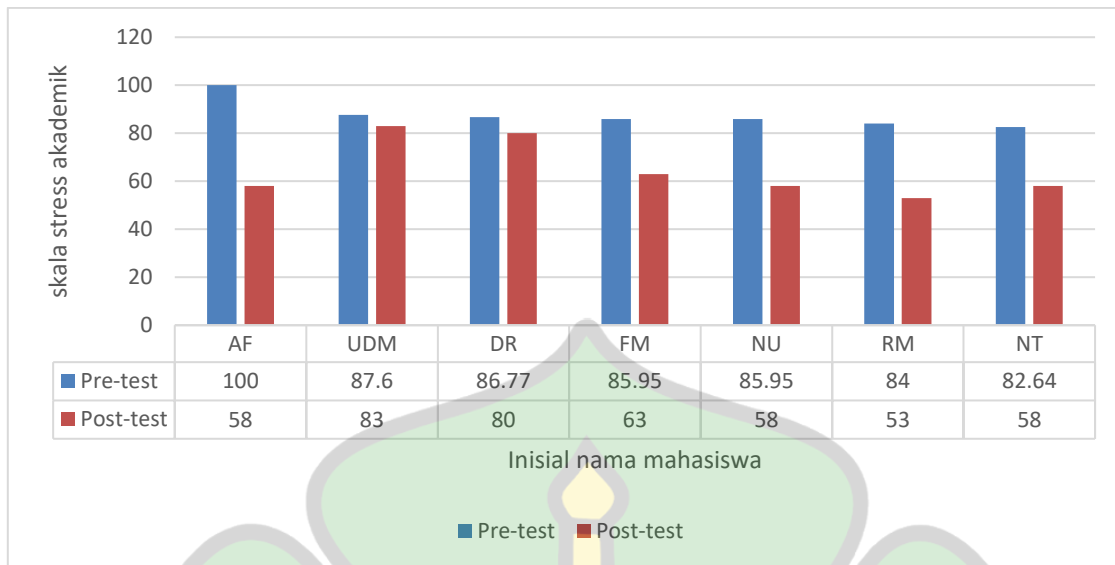
## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the application of mindfulness techniques through group counseling services in reducing academic stress in final year students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program. Data were obtained from measuring academic stress scale scores before and after the intervention on 7 students using a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The results showed a significant decrease in academic stress levels after students participated in group counseling sessions using mindfulness techniques. During the pre-test, the average academic stress score in students was 87.60 with the highest score of 100 and the lowest score of 82.64. After being given group counseling services using mindfulness techniques, the average pre-test score decreased to 64.71 with the highest score of 83 and the lowest score of 53. A descriptive comparison of scores can be seen in Table 3, which shows a decrease in the average score of 30 points.

**Table 3.**  
**Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores**

| Test Types | Average ( $\bar{X}$ ) | Lowest score | Highest Score |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Pre-test   | 87.60                 | 82.64        | 100           |
| Post-test  | 64.71                 | 53           | 83            |

The pre-test was conducted to measure the level of self-regulation of students before the intervention. After the pre-test scores were collected, the researcher assigned categories using a distribution of scores based on the mean and standard deviation, with the following category divisions: Low Score: <67, Medium Score: 68-101, High Score: >101. The pre-test results show variations in scores among respondents as can be seen in graph 1.



**Graph 1.**  
**Stress Level Diagram Pre-Test and Post-Test on**  
**Guidance and Counseling Students**

The data results in graph 1 show changes in academic stress scores in each participant before and after participating in mindfulness-based group counseling services. It can be seen that all participants experienced a decrease in stress scores, although at varying levels. The most significant decrease occurred in participants with the initials AF, from a score of 100 to 58, followed by RM from 84 to 53. This shows that participants with high initial stress levels benefited significantly from this intervention. The decrease in scores indicates the success of mindfulness techniques in helping students manage the academic stress they experience during the process of compiling their final assignments.

To test whether the decrease in academic stress levels is statistically significant, an analysis was conducted using a paired sample t-test. The test results showed that the t value = 3.894 with a significance of 0.008 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. Thus, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, namely that mindfulness technique-based group counseling services are effective in reducing academic stress levels of final year students.

**Table 4.**  
**Results of Paired Sample T-Test**

|        |                                          | Paired Samples Test |                |                                           |            |            | Significance |             |             |
|--------|------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
|        |                                          | Paired Differences  |                | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |            | t          | df           | One-Sided p | Two-Sided p |
|        |                                          | Mean                | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean                           | Lower      | Upper      |              |             |             |
| Pair 1 | SKOR TOTAL PRETEST - SKOR TOTAL POSTTEST | 6088.85714          | 4137.14924     | 1563.69543                                | 2262.63226 | 9915.08202 | 3.894        | .004        | .008        |

| Paired Samples Statistics |                     |           |   |                |                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---|----------------|-----------------|
|                           |                     | Mean      | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Pair 1                    | SKOR TOTAL PRETEST  | 6153.5714 | 7 | 4143.70289     | 1566.17248      |
|                           | SKOR TOTAL POSTTEST | 64.7143   | 7 | 11.85628       | 4.48125         |

Overall, the results of this study indicate that group counseling services with a mindfulness approach are effective in reducing academic stress levels of final year students, especially those who are completing their final assignments. Through this approach, students become more able to recognize and manage their thoughts and emotions consciously, without reacting impulsively or getting caught up in excessive academic pressure.

After participating in the service, students showed improvements in their ability to regulate focus, manage mental stress, and reduce negative emotional reactions to revisions, deadlines, and guidance dynamics. This suggests that mindfulness practice contributes to better emotional regulation, increased adaptability to stressful situations, and strengthened students' mental resilience during the academic process.

The mindfulness approach has also been shown to help students build full awareness of their present experiences, accept situations without judgment, and make decisions more calmly and wisely. These findings reinforce that mindfulness-based group counseling services can be an effective and applicable strategy in implementing guidance and counseling programs in higher education, especially in supporting students' psychological well-being and academic success as a whole.

The results of the study showed that mindfulness techniques applied in group counseling services were effective in reducing academic stress levels in final year students. This was evidenced by a decrease in the average stress score from 6153.57 in the pretest to 64.71 in the posttest, as well as a decrease in the standard deviation from 4143.70 to 11.86. This decrease indicated that the intervention not only had a significant impact on the group, but also made the distribution of stress levels more homogeneous. In addition, the results of the statistical test using the paired sample t-test showed that the t value = 3.894 with a significance of  $p = 0.008$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This value indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the scores before and after the intervention. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of mindfulness techniques in group counseling services is significantly effective in reducing academic stress in final year students.

Stress is a mental disorder that is often experienced by someone because of the pressure that arises from excessive anxiety, this is often experienced by

students, especially final year students. One of the causes of stress that is usually experienced by final year students is the preparation of final assignments or theses. Non-pharmacological interventions in reducing stress with the application of mindfulness therapy which is an exercise that can be done by someone to find out the conditions at that time, thoughts, and feelings that are being experienced in the current situation, and can help and focus on solving the problems faced. Mindfulness therapy can be used as an alternative in reducing stress in students (Yuliana et al., 2022).

The BK teacher has implemented individual counseling, but with mindfulness techniques. This is done in counseling sessions can provide a positive contribution to reducing students' academic stress levels, increasing self-awareness, and improving their ability to manage academic pressure. Practical implications of these findings include recommendations to integrate mindfulness practices into school counseling programs as an effective strategy to improve students' mental well-being in dealing with academic pressure (Harahap & Lubis, 2024).

Mindfulness techniques allow students to become more aware of their thoughts and emotions without reacting negatively immediately. In group counseling sessions, this practice is reinforced through supportive group dynamics—such as sharing experiences, listening to each other, and giving constructive feedback. This is in line with the findings (Aji Santoso & Rizky Rinaldi, 2022) which explains that mindfulness can reduce academic anxiety and stress by increasing self-awareness and emotional regulation abilities.

The consistent decrease in stress in almost all participants suggests that this approach is highly relevant for final year students facing high academic pressure. For example, participants with the highest initial scores such as AF experienced a significant decrease.

This finding is also supported by research (Wang & Sheibani, 2024), which states that group counseling can improve students' psychological well-being through social reflection and emotional support. Through this counseling process, students not only learn to manage stress adaptively, but also develop stronger interpersonal skills, empathy, and self-awareness.

Disturbed psychological conditions can affect immunity in fighting disease. One way to increase immunity is with positive emotions, to increase positive emotions is with mindfulness (meditation) which is a condition where an individual is aware of themselves and focuses on that moment. Mindfulness techniques can affect a person's psychological condition, increasing feelings of calm and thoughts which can improve psychological well-being. (Kamila, 2023).

According to (Yollanda & Rohmah, 2019) there was a significant difference between participants' stress before and after following the intervention process with

a Z value = -2.207 and significance  $p = 0.027$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) using the Wilcoxon test. Participants experienced a decrease in stress and mental burden became less and calmer.

Thus, the integration of mindfulness techniques in group counseling services can be considered as an effective and applicable intervention strategy in addressing academic stress in final year students. This approach helps students deal with academic pressure in a healthier way, as well as encouraging personal growth, self-efficacy, and mental well-being in a sustainable manner

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the application of mindfulness techniques in group counseling services is effective in reducing academic stress levels in final year students. This is indicated by a decrease in the average score of academic stress from 87.60 in the pretest to 64.71 in the posttest, as well as the results of the paired sample t-test which showed a significance value of 0.008 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that there is a statistically significant difference between before and after the intervention. Through mindfulness training, students are trained to be aware of and accept the thoughts and emotions that arise without overreacting, and to develop adaptive stress management skills. Group dynamics in the counseling process strengthen the process of self-reflection and emotional support between participants. These findings confirm that group counseling services with a mindfulness approach are able to improve emotional regulation, self-awareness, and psychological resilience of students in dealing with academic pressure. Thus, the integration of mindfulness techniques in group counseling can be used as an effective and applicable intervention strategy in guidance and counseling services in higher education, especially in helping final year students manage stress and improve the quality of their academic life in a sustainable manner

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