

# Effectiveness of Group Counseling Using Self Monitoring Techniques to Reduce Off Task Behavior in Students

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## Abstract

Off task is behavior of students who completely detach themselves from the learning environment and involve themselves in things that are not related to learning activities. Off task behavior is a real problem in schools. Off-task behavior can become a habit and have a bad impact on a student because it can affect other students in the class. Therefore, we need techniques or methods to reduce off-task behavior. Group counseling with self-monitoring is one technique for changing behavior. Through group counseling with self-monitoring techniques, it is hoped that students' off-task behavior can be reduced. The aim of this research is to determine the effectiveness of group counseling using self-monitoring techniques in reducing off-task behavior. Subjects were six junior high school students. This research is a Quasi Experimental using a Pretest Posttest One Group design. The instruments used in this research were interviews and observations using a behavior checklist. Data analysis used the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The research results show that group counseling using self monitoring techniques can reduce off task behavior in students. Based on the results of the wilcoxon test, it is significant  $0.028 < 0.05$ , which means self monitoring technique is effective in reducing off task behaviour.

Keywords: Off task behavior ; group counseling with self monitoring techniques ; junior high students

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## 1. Introduction

When studying at school students behavior such as talking to friends, ignoring the teacher, walking around during class are behaviors that are commonly found in the learning process. Students tend to carry out learning activities that are not related to the learning process. This behavior creates problems for teachers, where teachers become uncomfortable and have difficulty delivering the material. Apart from that, activities that are not related to the learning process in class also disturb other students who are studying. Students who are not engaged in the learning process also tend to have low academic scores. Based on this description, it can be seen that this undesirable student behavior (off-task behavior) not only disturbs other students as well as the teacher who teaches.

Off task behavior is one of the real problems in schools. Baker (2007) states that a type of behavior that influences student learning is off task behavior, where students detach themselves completely from the learning environment and involve themselves in things that are not related to learning activities. This undesirable behavior disrupts the process of learning activities, so that students display behavior that has nothing to do with learning activities. Sparzo and Potreet (Sukiman, 2005) provide a variety of labels to

describe off task behavior such as impulsiveness, inattention, non-completion of task, out of seat, speaking without permission, unmotivated to learn, unprepared for class or disruptive.

Off task behavior is caused by factors (a) poor social interaction skills, (b) desire to be accepted in the environment, (c) no clear concept of what is acceptable in learning, (d) lack of consistent discipline by teachers, (e) classroom management, and (f) and family conditions (Saripah & Widiastuti, 2019; Muijs & David, 2008; & Shofuhah & Naqiyah, 2016). However, these factors must be well understood by teachers, parents and students so can be reduced. If the factors from the start can be understood well, teachers will tend to be comfortable and focused in teaching. Likewise, students will not display off task behavior and will not disturb other students while they are studying.

As a result of observations in class on February 10, researchers found that 10 out of 32 students were talking to their friends beside them, not paying attention to the teacher explaining the lesson, thus disrupting the learning process in class. Likewise, the results of observations and interviews on August 8 in other classes, there were 10 out of 29 students who did not pay attention to the teacher when explaining the lesson, did not complete homework or assignments at school, walked around, made strange sounds, and threw things around. This causes students who show off task behavior to be called to the guidance and counseling room and ultimately get poor performance. Based on the findings above, it appears that in almost all schools students carry out activities that are not related to the appropriate learning process or what is better known as off-task behavior.

Handling related to student off-task behavior needs to be provided quickly and precisely, by providing group counseling with self-monitoring techniques. Group counseling is an effort to provide assistance provided by a counselor to people who need to resolve the problems they are facing in a group setting. Group counseling is considered quite effective in solving student problems (Resty, Talib & Munifah 2018). Group counseling is better than individual counseling because group members need input from other members and they can also learn to listen and appreciate rather than just talking. In the youth environment, group counseling is better than individual counseling because teenagers usually prefer to talk to other teenagers than to adults (Jacob, 2006).

The technique that will be used in this group counseling is self-monitoring. Kazdin (2013) states that one intervention that can be used to reduce off-task behavior and increase on-task behavior is self-monitoring. Johnson (1997) explains that self-monitoring is the process of observing and recording thoughts, feelings and behavior with the aim of defining problems or target behavior that you want to change, increasing or decreasing the target behavior, thoughts or feelings that are expected and evaluating the process of achieving goals. Self monitoring here aims to increase a person's awareness in managing their behavior by paying attention to and recording their daily thoughts, feelings and behavior to adjust their behavior to external situational factors. The self-monitoring strategy is a process where a person observes and records something about themselves and their interactions with environmental situations (Johnson, 1997). Self-monitoring is needed in the learning process, because when you want to manage the progress of your learning results, a person will be more motivated to further improve their abilities. It is also stated that self-monitoring has a positive impact on reading ability and productivity (Bruhn, McDaniel, & Kreigh, 2015), where this is quite closely related to on-task behavior.

Based on the results of the explanation above, the researcher believes that intervention for off-task behavior is necessary, because if intervention is not given from the start, off-task behavior will continue to develop up to high school level, even to university. Apart from that, when students have off-task behavior, it will disrupt the learning process of the entire class. Thus, researchers will use group counseling interventions with self-monitoring techniques to reduce student off-task behavior.

## 2. Method

This research is quantitative research with an experimental design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The design used was One Group Pretest-posttest to determine differences in students' off-task behavior levels before being given intervention (pretest) and after being given intervention (posttest) (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Sampling was carried out using a purposive sampling method which selected subjects that were in accordance with the research objectives. The research subjects were 6 junior high school students based on the results of interviews and observations using a behavior checklist. A check list sheet was created by researchers consisting of the characteristics of off task behavior. Researchers directly observe and record field data related to the reality that occurs to the students being studied. In this research, researchers only need to put a mark or check list on each behavior that appears. After filling in the check list sheet for students, data is collected. Next, the data will be converted into quantitative data in the form of numbers. Data analysis in this study used the Wilcoxon's Signed Rank Test.

This research includes three stages, (1) preparation stage; conducting literature studies on relevant theories regarding the training techniques used, compiling and validating intervention materials, and determining intervention groups, providing FGD (focus group discussions) to determine the root of student problems, (2) implementation phase; conducting a pretest with a behavior checklist to measure students' off-task behavior before being given intervention, then providing intervention through group counseling with self-monitoring techniques. Self-monitoring techniques are provided in student activities while at school with the stages of providing students and researchers with reviewing off-task behavior problems during class, providing self-monitoring material, providing self-monitoring worksheets, daily self-monitoring worksheets, behavior contract sheets, & Informed consent and evaluation . (3) at the end of the study; processing data from pretest and posttest results, analyzing research data, discussing research findings, providing conclusions based on data results and providing recommendations based on research results.

## 3. Result and Discussion

The pretest was given to students with the aim of seeing the number and baseline of students' off-task behavior. Researchers found that during Mathematics lessons there were 6 students, namely Al, Ad, Zai, Daf, Fai, Anw, who had high scores on off-task behavior such as talking in class, walking around in class, and not paying attention to the teacher when explaining the lesson. More details can be seen in table 1, as follows:

Table 1. Result of the pretest off task behavior students

No	Name	Characatheristic Off Task Behavior			Total Score
		Inattention	Out of seat	Talking without Permission	
1	Al	8	7	8	23
2	Ad	7	7	6	20
3	Zai	6	6	7	19
4	Daf	7	5	7	19
5	Fai	8	6	8	22
6	Anw	5	5	6	16

Based on the table above, it can be seen that in the mathematics subject, these 6 students have a total off task behavior score that tends to be high. Based on the pretest results, it can be explained that Al has a score of 23, Ad has a score of 20, Zai has a score of 19, Daf has a score of 19, Fai has a score of 22, and Anw has a score of 16. Furthermore, group counseling intervention with self-monitoring techniques is given to reduce off task behavior. Off-task behavior that becomes intervention is behavior that often appears during class, namely talking in class, walking in class, and not paying attention to the teacher when explaining the lesson. The results of the intervention can be seen in table 2, as follows:

Table 2. Result of the posttest off task behavior students

No	Name	Charactheristic Off Task Behavior			Total Score
		Inattention	Out of seat	Talking without Permission	
1	Al	2	0	4	6
2	Ad	1	0	3	4
3	Zai	0	0	0	0
4	Daf	2	1	1	4
5	Fai	2	0	0	2
6	Anw	1	0	1	2

The intervention was implemented in mathematics subjects to see changes in students' off-task behavior after being given the intervention. Based on table 2, it can be seen that when the intervention took place, students' off-task behavior decreased after being given group counseling using self-monitoring techniques. The following is a comparison graph of pretest and posttest off task behavior.

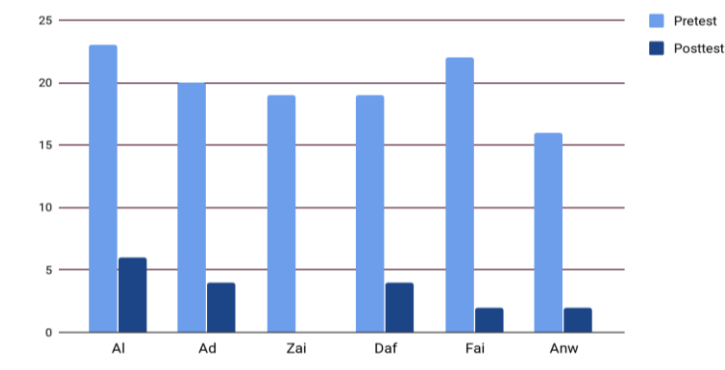


Fig. 1. (a) comparison of pretest and posttest off task behavior

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that all participants experienced a decrease in off-task behavior after being given the intervention. Next, the researcher checked whether there was a difference between the pretest and posttest scores using the Wilcoxon signed rank test. Following are the results of the test.

Table 3. Mean score of pretest and posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	6	19.8333	2.48328	16.00	23.00
Posttest	6	3.0000	2.09762	.00	6.00

Tabel 4. Result of signification wilcoxon signed rank test

	Posttest-Pretest
Z	-2.201 <sup>a</sup>
Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)	.028

Based on the difference test table above, it shows the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values for each group of data (pretest and posttest). It appears that the mean or average posttest score is 3.0000, which is smaller than the pretest score, namely 19.8333. Furthermore, based on the results of the Wilcoxon signed rank test calculation, the Z value obtained was -2.201 with a p value (Asymp. Sig 2 tailed) of 0.005 which is less than the research critical limit of 0.05 so it can be seen that there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest results.

Based on the results of observations after the posttest, it appears that almost all group members experienced changes in behavior in a positive direction. This is in accordance with the opinion of Jacob (2006) who says group counseling is better than individual counseling because group members need input from other members and they can also learn to listen, respect rather than just talk. In youth settings, group counseling is better than individual counseling because teenagers usually prefer to talk to other teenagers than to adults. These positive results are also in accordance with research conducted by Dewi, et al (2017) which found that the off task behavior of SMA Negeri 2 Palu students after being given self-monitoring strategy group counseling was lower than before being given self-monitoring strategy group counseling. Likewise, research conducted by Krase (2013) stated that self-monitoring can reduce off-task behavior. The self-monitoring and reinforcement techniques given to junior high school students in Malang by Puspitaningtias (2010) are also effective in reducing off-task behavior. The decrease occurred between 50% and 83.1%. Likewise, the results of research conducted by Sintiasari (2018) found that there was a change in the off-task behavior of junior high school students in Gresik after being given individual counseling using behavioral contract techniques. Then Martinsone (2017) revealed that positive reinforcement & behavior contracts are effective in reducing off-task behavior in elementary and middle school children. Apart from that, this method also has more influence on male students than female students.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on changes during the pretest and posttest, it is clear that there are significant changes in off task behavior. This can be seen from the follow-up which lasted for 3 days, where the students were finally able to demonstrate their on-task behavior. Although there are some students who still show off-task behavior, it is not as much as they did before the intervention.

This student's on-task behavior is also supported by the results of interviews with mathematics teachers where the teacher said that during the intervention and after the intervention took place, learning went very well. The off-task behaviors usually displayed by students are much reduced than before the intervention. The

science teacher also expressed the same thing, where he revealed that his students seemed to have experienced changes in behavior for the better. Where they have reduced their behavior of talking in class, walking around in class and are also able to pay attention when the teacher explains lessons in class. However, according to the teacher, intervention must continue to be implemented so that this change in behavior persists. The librarian, who can observe students' behavior every day, also revealed that students have seen changes in behavior compared to before the intervention. Children began to show good behavior after being given intervention.

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