

## Behavioral Counseling with Systematic Desensitization Techniques to Reduce Anxiety: Development of Counseling Guidelines

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**Abstract:** This study aims to determine the acceptance (acceptability) of behavioral counseling guides with systematic desensitization techniques to reduce student anxiety. This guide is an instrument for BK teachers in providing counseling guidance services in schools. The development procedure in this study follows the 4D development model which is limited only to content validation testing. There are five guidance and counseling experts and practitioners who have tested the feasibility of this guide. The instrument used for the assessment consisted of 25 items that referred to the acceptance of the handbook. Analysis of the results of the assessment uses the formulation of the content validity ratio calculation from Lawshe. The results of the analysis show that the validation of the cognitive behavioral counseling manual has a content validity index (CVI) of 0.95, which means very good or special. meet the eligibility criteria to be used as an instrument in carrying out counseling guidance services.

**Keyword :** Behavioral Counseling, Systematic Desensitization techniques, Anxiety, 4D



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## Introduction

Students find it difficult to achieve learning achievement in school is one factor that is in the spotlight in the world of education. One factor that causes this is anxiety. Bandalas, Yates, and Thorndike (Salvin, 2009) say that anxiety can interfere with the improvement of students' abilities in school. The decreased ability of students can be seen from difficulties in learning, difficulty in transferring the knowledge possessed and difficulty in applying knowledge in tests / examinations. In addition, students also experience anxiety when faced with subjects that are considered difficult, and the teacher is strict in teaching. Anxiety is a term of psychological disorder that has the characteristics of fear, concern for the future, prolonged worry, and nervousness. Hence, Bufka, Barlow and David (Sharma, 2018) see anxiety as an emotional state in which

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people feel restless, agitated, or afraid. In addition, Palitz and Kendall (Taty, 2020) say anxiety is a manifestation of mixed emotional arrangements, which occurs when students experience feelings of stress, frustration, and inner conflict which are unpleasant conditions which include fear, tension, worry, and confusion. In addition, anxiety is someone who experiences fear or tension in facing learning problems. Actually, anxiety is a great force that can move someone to behave well to those who deviate and the behavior is a form of self-defense against anxiety (Gunarso, 2003: 27). Anxiety is actually needed to increase motivation in achieving a goal, but when the anxiety experienced by the individual is too high it will have a negative impact on the individual. In addition to the anxiety caused by stressors related to studies, the geographical location where a student lives can also have a negative impact on them (Harvey & Clark, 2018).

Various phenomena regarding students who experience anxiety at the junior high school level (SMP) such as when taking the national exam or school exam many students cannot reach the standard values set by the organizers (government or school). In addition, Based on research from Agustiar and Asmi (2010: 9) said many students who consider the final exam as a scary thing so that triggers the emergence of anxiety. And according to Abin (Rudinsyah, 2016) said students who have learning difficulties will find it difficult to understand the subject matter and are less able to master the subject matter and also students will avoid the subject and the decline in learning value and learning achievement will be low. Anxiety experienced by students will cause many problems for these students and will have a bad impact on the students themselves.

Anxiety students in the teaching and learning process and when facing exams must get good treatment so that students can follow the learning process effectively so that during the exam, the student will feel calmer. Dawood (Sosilo, 2019) states that anxiety is a common phenomenon that causes poor academic achievement in students. Someone who experiences feelings of anxiety, nervousness, or tension in the face of an uncertain situation, means that person is experiencing anxiety. As a school counselor who handles student problems and improves the quality of education, has an obligation to deal with the anxiety problems experienced by students. Difficulties that are often experienced by school counselors are the absence of guidelines for implementing a counseling model that can be used to reduce student anxiety. This resulted in counseling guidance services provided have not been able to be implemented optimally so that the anxiety experienced by students can not be reduced / reduced as expected. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a guidebook for the implementation of counseling models that can be a reference for counselors in an effort to reduce anxiety.

One of the counseling models that can be used to reduce student anxiety is a behavioral counseling model using systematic desensitization techniques, as stated by Willis (Muslih et al. 2017) that behavioral counseling has a major role to modify behavior through implementation in the environment so that it occurs learning process for behavior change. Behavioral counseling states that human behavior can be changed or manipulated, by practicing behavior. Manipulation is by providing exercises that can minimize bad behavior and gradually disappear (Ardi and Mey Sisin, 2018). Counselors view that the deviant behavior shown by the counselee is a learned habit, which can be changed with positive situations so that the behavior of the counselee who deviates can turn into positive. Surya (2003) explained that in the behavioral concept of human behavior is the result of learning, so it can be changed by manipulating and changing the conditions of learning. According to Dharsana (Putra, et al, 2017) behavioral is a theory and an attempt to explain the principles and rules of human behavior. The counseling process as structuring the process or learning experience that can help the counselee to change deviant behavior into good / positive behavior. Fioyce (Whitlock, 2002) says effective interventions usually involve behavioral counseling techniques and the use of other resources to help counselees make the recommended behavioral changes.

The behavioristic approach does not describe certain theoretical assumptions about humans directly. Everyone seems to have the same positive and negative tendencies, humans are basically shaped and determined by their social and cultural environment. All human behavior is studied (Corey, 2013). Problematic behavior is defined as negative behavior or inappropriate behavior or behavior, i.e. behavior that is not as expected. Effective interventions usually involve behavioral counseling techniques and the use of other resources to help patients make the recommended behavior changes. Wrong behavior is formed through a process of interaction with the environment. This means that even the social behavior of the individual is not right, within a few moments receiving gifts from certain parties (Whick, 2002). In addition, according to A. Steptoe, S. Kerry, E. Rink, and S. Hilton (Sudarsana, Ni Ketut Suarni, Ulan Sari, 2019) Behavioral Counseling has a basic assumption that every behavior can be learned, and old (negative) behavior can be replaced with new (positive) behavior. a person can potentially have good or bad behavior, right or wrong. In addition, humans are seen as individuals who are able to reflect on their own behavior, manage and control their behavior and can learn new behaviors or can influence the behavior of others.

Behavioral experts assume that behavioral disorders are the result of a distorted learning process, therefore behavior can be changed by changing the environment so that behavior becomes positive and this behavior change makes it easy to be able to evaluate client progress more clearly (Lubis, 2013).

Behavioral counseling process can run in accordance with the expected goals if the implementation in addition to involving the participation of counselors also include counselees. Gantina (2011: 157) states that: "behavioral counseling has four stages: (1) assessment, (2) goal setting, (3) technique implementation, and (4) evaluation termination. The use of appropriate techniques becomes very important about successful counseling. Krumbolts and Thoresen (Willis, 2010) say that the use of counseling techniques must be adapted to the needs of the counselee and there is not a technique that is used continuously, but consider other alternative techniques to achieve the goals of counseling namely behavior change. Systematic desensitization technique is a behavioristic approach which is one of the most widely used techniques in behavior therapy. Developed by Wolpe in 1958, Systematic Desensitization was one of the first behavior modification techniques used to treat phobias. Desensitization technique is an exposure procedure that causes loss of anxiety responses (Vallejo & Slocker, 2016). Systematic desensitization is a technique used to help reduce anxiety related behavior problems effectively. reduction in the intensity of conditioned responses (anxiety) by forming incompatible responses (relaxation) to conditioned stimuli (general anxiety) (Oby, 2019). Systematic desensitization techniques are used to erase deviant behavior and generate conflicting (positive) behaviors or responses. According to Richmond (Aihie, 2018) Systematic desensitization as a method has consistently proven effective in the treatment of anxiety and phobias. A systematic desensitization technique was developed by Wolpe who said that all behaviors and tendencies to respond with negative emotions to threats are expressions of anxiety (Sofyan, 2010). This technique is combined with relaxation techniques. In the relaxation technique the counselee is asked to illustrate the situation that most causes anxiety to the point where the client does not feel anxious anymore. The purpose of systematic desensitization is to remove negative behavior by conditioning the counselee to remain comfortable. Sofyan (2010) asserts that this technique intends to teach counselees to be able to provide inconsistent responses related to natural anxiety. Such conditions can be realized by creating comfortable conditions for the counselee. In addition, Walker (Sumarji and Hartono, 2012) states the purpose of this technique is used if the counselee is afraid of facing certain things, and can also be used for someone who has a phobia, this technique will help to reduce anxiety as a result of the things being faced.

There are several studies that have proven the effectiveness of behavioral counseling in systematic desensitization techniques. Research findings from Tresna (2011) say that behavioral counseling with systematic desensitization techniques is recommended to be considered as one of the frameworks of guidance and counseling in an effort to reduce anxiety facing the exam. Furthermore, Sandana and Siti Rahmi (2019) say that systematic desensitization techniques are effective in reducing student learning anxiety. In line with these findings, Aryani, Suarni and Arum (2014) state that the application of behavioral counseling with desensitization techniques to minimize student anxiety.

Based on this explanation, a counseling model that has been proven effective in reducing student anxiety is a behavioral counseling model with systematic desensitization techniques. Therefore, this study intends to develop a guidebook that can be a guideline in the implementation of counseling guidance services based on behavioral counseling with systematic desensitization techniques in an effort to reduce student anxiety through a development study.

## Method

The method that will be used in this research is research and development. In this research and development method there are several types of models. The model chosen in this research and development is the 4-D model development. This 4-D (Four D) development model is a development model of learning tools. The 4D model design was developed by S. Thiagarajan, Dorothy S. Semmel, and Melvyn I. Semmel (1974: 5) which was used for the development of instructional development tools (Instructional Development). The 4D Development Model consists of 4 stages: define, design, develop, and disseminate.

This method or model was chosen because to produce a product in the form of a counseling guide for a behavioristic approach to systematic desensitization techniques. Products that have been developed are then tested for eligibility with product validity and trials to find out to what extent it can reduce student anxiety. Research and development methods (research and development) are research methods used to

produce products and test their effectiveness. Trianto (Rochmad, 2012) said this model was seen as an instructional development model with stages of define, design, develop and disseminate.

- a. Define: Activities at this stage are carried out to define and define development requirements. In general, this definition is carried out activities of development needs analysis, product development requirements in accordance with the needs and research and development models.
- b. Design (Planning): After getting the problem from the defining stage, then the planning stage is carried out. This stage aims to plan / design a product in the form of a behavioral counseling guide for systematic desensitization techniques
- c. Develop: The development phase is carried out to modify the initial product (prototype) behavioral counseling guide desensitization techniques that have been prepared in the previous stage. According to Thiagarajan (1974) the development stage can consist of two activities namely expert validation (expert appraisal) and product testing (developmental testing).
- d. Disseminate: After the behavioral counseling guidelines for systematic desensitization techniques have been revised based on advice from experts at the development stage, the cognitive behavior counseling manual can be used by the BK teacher as a guide in implementing counseling guidance services, specifically to reduce student anxiety. This stage was not carried out in the study because it considered several things related to the public health situation in the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The subjects of this study were individuals or respondents who were used and used as sources of information to collect research data, and then the information was analyzed to obtain research results. The subjects in this study were experts or professionals in the field of Guidance and Counseling. The experts or experts are 3 dosen Counseling Guidance at Ganesha University of Education and 2 Counseling Guidance Teachers at the junior high level including the first expert is Dr. I Ketut Gading, M.Psi in the field of Psychology, the second expert is Dr. I Kadek Suranata, S.Pd., M.Pd., Cons in the Field of Counseling Guidance, the third expert is Prof. I Nyoman Dantes in the field of Education Research and Evaluation, the fourth expert is Ayu Putu Dewanti Arsari Pratiwi, S.Pd as a BK teacher at Ship Swastika Middle School, and Ni Wayan Ari Suniawati, S.Pd as BK teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Kuta.

The expert validation instrument is used to obtain data related to the assessment of the expert / expert on the developed counseling guide. The assessment results form the basis for product improvement / revision in the form of a counseling manual before being trialled. The validation sheet for the counseling manual is filled in by an expert, namely a counseling guidance lecturer and a counseling teacher. This sheet consists of a feasibility assessment sheet for cognitive behavioral counseling guides compiled using a Likert scale with a score range of 1-4.

The preparation of the validity sheet was developed by referring to several indicators namely utility, feasibility and accuracy. The results of responses by experts / practitioners to each item on the test sheet validity counseling manuals were analyzed using the content validity ratio approach (content validity ratio) proposed by Lawshe (1975). The formula for calculating CVR is as follows:

$$CVR = \frac{ne - N/2}{\frac{N}{2}}$$

(Lawshe, 1975)

Information:

- CVR : *Content validity ratio*  
N : Number of experts  
n<sub>e</sub> : Number of experts who provide relevant value

Kriteria pengambilan keputusan berdasarkan hasil uji CVR adalah sebagai berikut:

- If  $n_e < \frac{1}{2} N$  then  $CVR < 0$  (invalid)

$n_c = 1/2 N$  then  $CVR = 0$  (invalid)

$n_c > 1/2 N$  then  $CVR = 0$  (valid)

Next, the overall validity value is determined using the CVI (content validity index). The determination of CVI Lawshe (1975) uses the following formula:

$$CVI = \frac{\sum CVR}{k}$$

(Lawshe, 1975)

Information:

$CVI$  : content validity index

$\sum CVR$  : total content validity ratio

$k$  : number of items

## Results and Discussion

This research is a type of Research and Development with a product developed in the form of a behavioral counseling guidebook with desensitization techniques to reduce student anxiety. The development procedure carried out follows the 4D development model proposed by Thiagarajan (1974) which consists of four stages namely define, design, develop, and disseminate. However, for the disseminate stage in this study it was not done because it considered several things related to the public health situation in the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Behavioral counseling assessment systematic desensitization techniques involving 5 people judges (assessment tools) used is a questionnaire consisting of 25 statements. Based on the calculation of the CVR index on each item, it can be seen that the behavioral counseling guidelines for systematic desensitization techniques meet the validity for all items (25) of the assessment used. These results indicate that the behavioral counseling guide for systematic desensitization techniques developed has validity based on all assessment items used. Based on the results of the assessment, there were 3 items that were judged to be irrelevant by each of the assessors, namely item number 13 regarding the appropriateness of time allocation for each counseling session and item no. 22 about the appearance of the manual. To determine whether these items still meet the criteria, it is necessary to make a decision based on the calculation of the validity index with CVR.

After knowing the CVR index based on each item of the assessment instrument, then the content validity index calculation will be performed to guide the behavioral counseling guidelines for systematic desensitization techniques as a whole using the CVI formulation (Lawshe, 1975). The CVI calculation is basically the average CVR value for all items. To determine the criteria for a good CVI index magnitude, Lawshe (1975) suggests that a score above 0.50 is a good index, while a  $CVI > 0.90$  to 1 is a special index. Based on the results of calculations in table 4.3 note that  $\sum CVR = 23.8$  so that the calculation of CVI is as follows.

$$CVI = \frac{23,8}{25} = 0,95$$

The CVI calculation results from the cognitive behavior counseling guide based on the assessment of 5 experts is 0.95 (special). This result can be interpreted that based on the assessment of experts and practitioners using an assessment instrument consisting of 25 statements, the behavioral counseling guidance for systematic desensitization techniques developed has a very good or special index of content validity (CVI). In addition to obtaining the score, the expert or expert provides suggestions for improving the behavioral counseling manual for systematic desensitization techniques to reduce student anxiety. The first expert Dr. I Ketut Gading., M.Psi as Lecturer in Guidance and Counseling at Ganesha University of Education said that to overcome anxiety, counseling activities should be used in dealing with anxiety. The second expert, Dr. I Kadek Suranata., M.Pd., Kons as a Lecturer at Ganesha University of Education gave advice on the arrangement and display of books that needed to be refined. From the advice given, the

researchers improved and supplemented the guidebook product to make it more useful for use and distribution to school educators.

Behavioral counseling guidance Systematic desensitization techniques developed in this study can be used as an instrument in the provision of counseling guidance services in schools so that it will add facilities and infrastructure to support counseling guidance programs. The development of behavioral counseling guidance for systematic desensitization techniques in this study will meet the needs of schools, especially related to the availability of devices / instruments for counseling guidance services in schools so that efforts to help students achieve optimal development and be able to have a complete personality, both in personal, social, learning aspects , and career, as well as being able to develop the welfare of psychological aspects in accordance with the goals of counseling guidance as stipulated in the Minister of Education Regulation Number 111 Year 2014 can be achieved optimally.

The availability of a behavioral counseling guidance book for systematic desensitization techniques will also help BK teachers especially in providing counseling guidance services in an effort to reduce student anxiety. Behavioral counseling procedures using systematic desensitisation techniques in the guide book follow the stages in accordance with the technique used. The technique used in the behavioral counseling guide, systematic desensitization technique, has relevance for reducing the anxiety experienced by students. In the systematic desensitization technique relaxation methods are used which are done by training students to remain calm and reduce the symptoms of anxiety that arise due to negative perceptions about themselves in body parts, such as rapid heartbeats, trembling in the legs or hands, irregular breathing. Meanwhile, systematic desensitization is done by training students to display a response that is opposite to anxiety, students are trained against anxiety by imagining a calm or peaceful atmosphere.

The development of a behavioral counseling guidebook for systematic desensitization techniques has implications for implementing effective counseling guidance services to reduce student anxiety. Several studies have proven the effectiveness of behavioral counseling in systematic desensitization techniques including research by Lestari, Syariffudin and Ratna (2013) which confirms that the behavioral counseling model of systematic desensitization techniques is effective in reducing student anxiety in schools. Further research by Marantini, Ni Nengah Madri and Nyoman Dantes (2014) found that behavioral counseling with systematic desensitization techniques can help reduce students' communication anxiety. These findings are in line with the research of Nufi, La Ode, Sudarmi (2018) who confirm the effectiveness of behavioral counseling systematic desensitization techniques can reduce student anxiety behavior in facing the end of semester exams.

To strengthen the results of the expert test analysis, researchers conducted a readability analysis by students. Respondents are junior high school students at SMP Negeri 1 Kuta. Students were asked questions about the design, content and application of techniques, as well as the usefulness of counseling guidebook products. Based on the analysis of data on 20 respondents, 75% of respondents stated that the appearance or design of the book was interesting and in accordance with the contents of the book and 25% of respondents stated that the appearance of the book was not attractive. Furthermore, for the sentence and ease in applying the technique 80% chose the application of the technique that was easy to understand and applied while 20% found it difficult to apply and understand the technique in the guidebook. Furthermore, in terms of usefulness, 90% of students consider the manual gives benefits to students in their lives while 10% of students consider the manual does not have a significant effect. Based on the readability analysis by students, it can be concluded that guidebook products are important to develop.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of this research and development it can be concluded that this research and development produced a product in the form of a Behavioral Counseling Handbook to Reduce Student Anxiety. The development of the guidebook was carried out through several stages following the 4D development model proposed by Thiagarajan (1974). Based on expert validation, it can be seen that the behavioral counseling guidebook for systematic desensitization techniques to reduce student anxiety that was developed has a content validity index (CVI) of 0.95 which means very good or special. Thus the behavioral counseling handbook for systematic desensitization techniques to reduce student anxiety developed in this study fulfills the acceptance criteria for use as an instrument in carrying out counseling guidance services..

Based on the results of this study, the advice that can be given is the Behavioral Desensitization Counseling Handbook for Systematic Desensitization Techniques is suggested to be used as an instrument by BK teachers in schools to reduce student anxiety, in addition it is necessary to conduct further research

and development regarding the Behavioral Counseling Handbook for Desensitization Techniques systematization to develop other psychological aspects so as to be able to complete the instrument of counseling guidance services in schools and the results of this research and development may be disseminated so that it can be used more widely.

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