

Modified Self-Hypnosis Mentoring to Reduce Thesis-Related Anxiety Among Final-Year Students

Endah Luqmanasari^{1*}, Rofik Darmayanti²

¹ Karya Husada College of Health Sciences Kediri, Kediri, Indonesia

² Faculty of Health Sciences, Universitas STRADA Indonesia, Kediri, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: endahluqmana@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

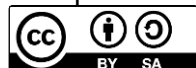
This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Modified Self-Hypnosis training in reducing academic anxiety among final-year university students completing their undergraduate theses. Academic stress during thesis writing frequently triggers varying levels of anxiety that can hinder student progress and overall psychological well-being. A quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was conducted involving 30 final-year undergraduate students selected through purposive sampling. Anxiety levels were measured before and after the intervention using a standardized anxiety assessment scale, and data were statistically analysed using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. Prior to the intervention, the majority of respondents experienced moderate (60.0%) and severe (26.7%) levels of anxiety. Following the self-hypnosis training sessions, a marked reduction in anxiety was observed, with 46.7% of participants reporting mild anxiety and 40.0% reaching normal (non-anxious) status. The average anxiety score decreased significantly from 28.43 to 16.10, with a statistical test result of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These findings demonstrate that Modified Self-Hypnosis is a highly effective, non-pharmacological intervention for alleviating thesis-related anxiety. Implementing this structured self-help technique provides students with self-regulation skills to manage academic pressure, making it a valuable supportive service for university counseling units to enhance student mental health and academic completion rates. Prior to the intervention, the majority of respondents experienced moderate (60.0%) and severe (26.7%) levels of anxiety. Following the Modified Self-Hypnosis training, 46.7% of participants reported mild anxiety and 40.0% reached a normal (non-anxious) status. The mean anxiety score decreased from 28.43 before the intervention to 16.10 after the intervention. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test demonstrated a statistically significant reduction in anxiety scores ($Z = [\text{insert } Z \text{ value}]$, $p < 0.001$).

Keywords : Academic Anxiety, Final-Year Students, Modified Self-Hypnosis, Thesis Writing

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INTRODUCTION

Writing a thesis is a mandatory final requirement that undergraduate students must complete to earn their bachelor's degree. For the majority of final-year students, this phase is

often a highly stressful period (Lian, 2021). Unlike regular coursework, the process of writing a thesis demands a high degree of independence, critical thinking skills, and effective time management (Robbins & Zivnuska, 2020). Pressures to graduate on time, difficulties in finding relevant literature, obstacles in scheduling consultations with advisors, and research outcomes that do not match expectations serve as primary triggers for academic anxiety (Smith et al., 2022; Wardani & Sholichah, 2023).

This anxiety phenomenon is evident among final-year students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri. Based on preliminary interviews and brief screenings conducted with several students currently working on their final thesis, the majority reported experiencing psychological and physical symptoms of anxiety. They reported sleep disturbances (insomnia), decreased concentration, excessive fear prior to advising sessions, and a tendency to postpone their thesis work (procrastination), which aligns with common academic stress indicators (Savitsky et al., 2020). This burden is further compounded by their status as health science students, who are not only required to complete a scientific research report but must also prepare for the national competency exam—a dual pressure unique to clinical and healthcare education tracks (Al-Shafae et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2024). If left unaddressed, chronic anxiety has the potential to impair academic performance and delay graduation (Pascoe et al., 2020). One effective, non-pharmacological method that students can practice independently to reduce this tension is self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis works by relaxing the conscious mind and accessing the subconscious mind to instil positive suggestions. This method was modified into a *modified self-hypnosis* technique to make it more practical, concise, and relevant to the daily academic stressors faced by students. This modification integrates deep breathing relaxation techniques combined with visualizations of defence success and positive emotional anchoring techniques. Through this method, students are trained to consciously and independently control their stress response whenever anxiety arises.

As a health education institution, giving attention to the mental health of final-year students is crucial. Therefore, this community service program was conducted in the form of a *modified self-hypnosis* mentoring program for final-year students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri. Through this activity, students are expected not only to gain a theoretical understanding of stress management but also to master practical *modified self-hypnosis* skills that they can apply independently to reduce anxiety, enhance focus, and optimize productivity in completing their studies.

METHOD

1. Preparation Stage (Situation Analysis)

- a. **Administrative Clearance:** The research team coordinated with the institutional leadership and study program administrators at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri to secure ethical clearance, institutional permits, and finalize the data collection schedule.
- b. **Purposive Participant Selection (Pre-Test):** Baseline quantitative screening was conducted using the standardized Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) instrument to measure the academic anxiety levels of the target student population. Utilizing a purposive sampling method, students who met the specific inclusion criteria (exhibiting moderate to severe anxiety levels) were enrolled as the core quasi-experimental sample, totaling 30 participants.

2. Implementation Stage (Education and Training)

The implementation phase was carried out through interactive lectures, guided

demonstrations, and direct hands-on practice, divided into several sessions:

- a. Educational Session: Participants received psychoeducation regarding academic stress, anxiety symptoms, and the working mechanism of the subconscious mind in managing negative emotions.
 - b. Modified Self-Hypnosis Training Session: The team demonstrated the step-by-step modified self-hypnosis technique tailored for practical application. These steps included:
 - c. Independent Practice & Mentoring Session: Participants were required to practice this technique independently twice daily (in the morning upon waking up and at night before sleeping) over a 2-week period, monitored via a digital daily logbook.
3. Evaluation Stage
- The success of this community service program was quantitatively evaluated at the end of the intervention period (Post-Test).
- a. Evaluation Instrument: Participants completed the HAM-A questionnaire again following the completion of the independent practice period.
 - b. Success Analysis: Pre-test and post-test scores were tabulated to observe the percentage reduction in anxiety levels. The paired non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was utilized to analyse the statistical significance and overall effectiveness of the intervention before and after the program.
 - c. Statistical Analysis: Pre-test and post-test scores were tabulated to calculate the mean reduction in academic anxiety levels. The non-parametric Paired Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was utilized to analyse the statistical significance and determine the overall effectiveness of the intervention.
 - d. Ethical Considerations: All subjects participated voluntarily, having provided written informed consent prior to their enrolment in the quasi-experimental study.

RESULTS

1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This community service activity involved 30 final-year students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri who were actively working on their undergraduate theses. The demographic characteristics of the participants based on age, gender, and length of time spent working on their thesis are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Characteristics of Activity Participants
Characteristics of Respondents (N = 30)

Respondent Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	8	26,7%
	Female	22	73,3%
Age	21 – 22 years	19	63,3%
	23 – 24 years	11	36,7%
Duration of Thesis Writing	1 – 2 Semester	21	70,0%
	> 2 Semester	9	30,0%
Total		30	100,0%

2. Anxiety Level Measurement Results (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

The effectiveness of the *modified self-hypnosis* mentoring program was evaluated by comparing the students' academic anxiety levels prior to the intervention (pre-test) and following the completion of independent practice period (post-test). Measurements were

conducted using the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) instrument, with the results presented below:

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Student Anxiety Levels Before and After

Anxiety Levels	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
No Anxiety / Normal	0	0,0%	12	40,0%
Mild Anxiety	4	13,3%	14	46,7%
Moderate Anxiety.	18	60,0%	4	13,3%
Severe Anxiety	8	26,7%	0	0,0%

Table 2 demonstrates a significant clinical shift in the psychological condition of the participants. Prior to the mentoring program, all participants were within the range of moderate to severe anxiety levels, as evidenced by frequent complaints of revision delay (procrastination), excessive fear when scheduling consultations with academic advisors, and sleep pattern disturbances.

However, after receiving training and regularly practicing the modified self-hypnosis technique independently, a drastic reduction in anxiety levels was observed. The percentage of students experiencing severe anxiety was successfully reduced to 0%, with the majority of participants seeing their anxiety status decrease to mild levels or even moving into the non-anxious category.

3. Program Success Analysis

To evaluate the statistical significance of this community service program's impact, a paired statistical test was conducted on the participants' total Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) scores.

Table 3. Statistical Test Results of Anxiety Score Differences Before and After the Activity

Variable	Rata-Rata (Mean) Pre- test	Rata-Rata (Mean) Post-	Z Score	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)
		test		
Anxiety Score	28.43	16.10	-4.782	0.000

* Note: A p-value < 0.05 indicates that the reduction in anxiety is statistically significant

Based on the statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank a significant *p-value* of $p < 0.05$ was obtained. This result empirically proves that the *modified self-hypnosis* mentoring program is significantly effective in reducing academic anxiety among final-year students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri while completing their undergraduate theses.

Through breathing relaxation techniques, visualization of thesis defence success, and the application of positive emotional anchoring methods, students were trained to calm their conscious mind and reprogram their subconscious mind. Positive impacts reported by participants include increased self-confidence, enhanced mental clarity during revisions, and the ability to independently manage emotional tension whenever anxiety symptoms arise.

DISCUSSION

The research results demonstrate that the Modified Self-Hypnosis intervention provides a significant positive impact in reducing anxiety levels among final-year students completing their undergraduate thesis. This reduction is evident from the meaningful difference in anxiety scores observed between the pre-test and post-test assessments

following the mentoring process.

Theoretically, anxiety in final-year students is commonly triggered by external factors such as revision demands, fear of failure, communication barriers with academic advisors, and future uncertainty post-graduation. A continuously active fight-or-flight response triggers the dominance of high-frequency beta brainwaves. This neurological phenomenon aligns with studies by Grey Matters Studio (2023), which consistently link excessive beta wave patterns with hyperarousal, reduced emotional regulation, and an inability to relax. When students are locked in this state of hyper-vigilance, it directly manifests as difficulty concentrating, insomnia, and academic procrastination.

The modifications within this self-hypnosis technique integrate progressive relaxation, deep breathing exercises, and positive affirmations tailored specifically to the context of thesis-related obstacles. This process functions by stimulating parasympathetic nervous system activity and reducing cortisol production. These physiological dynamics corroborate the findings of Infusion Health (2026), which demonstrated that mindfulness and targeted relaxation practices effectively counteract stress by suppressing cortisol levels and enhancing alpha wave power.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Modified Self-Hypnosis mentoring is an effective psychological intervention for reducing academic anxiety among final-year undergraduate students. Through this technique, students develop crucial cognitive skills to control negative thoughts, enhance inner calmness, and independently foster focus and self-confidence. Based on these findings, this intervention is highly recommended as a supportive strategy within university student counseling services to protect student mental health and facilitate academic progress.

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