



Implementation of the Problem Box Game in Classical Guidance Services to Overcome Student Anxiety When Facing Madrasah Assessments

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Abstract

Academic anxiety is a common problem experienced by students approaching madrasah assessments and can negatively impact concentration, learning motivation, and psychological well-being. This study aims to determine academic anxiety through the game-based classical guidance service "Problem Box" using a descriptive qualitative approach. The subjects were 23 ninth-grade students at MTsN 1 Banyumas who went through the initial stages of filling out the Problem Checklist (DCM) until implementing the "Problem Box" game. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and DCM analysis to determine the steps for implementing the guidance. The results showed that the "Problem Box" game helped students express their concerns, share experiences, and find effective strategies in managing academic stress. In addition, this approach increased social interaction and created a more supportive classroom environment, making game-based classical guidance an alternative in helping students deal with academic anxiety.

Keywords: *Academic anxiety, classical guidance, Problem Box game.*

Introduction

Academic anxiety is a problem that is often experienced by students, especially when facing madrasah assessments (AM). This assessment is one of the determining factors in students' academic achievement so that it often causes psychological stress that leads to anxiety. Academic anxiety itself is an emotional condition characterized by feelings of discomfort, tension, and excessive worry about academic aspects, such as understanding material, achievement, and exam results ¹. The concept of academic anxiety itself refers to feelings of anxiety or pressure that arise due to demands in the world of education, such as academic achievement, curriculum load, evaluation of learning outcomes, and completion of school assignments ². Where anxiety that is not managed properly can have a negative impact on various aspects of a student's life, from concentration in learning, understanding material, to achieving academic results. In addition, high anxiety can also affect the social and emotional aspects of students, such as decreased self-confidence, increased emotional tension, and the emergence of avoidance behavior in facing academic challenges.³

In the world of education, academic anxiety has become a concern for educators and guidance and counseling staff. School guidance and counseling services play a crucial role in helping students overcome academic anxiety and providing strategies to manage their stress. One strategy that can be implemented is through classical guidance services using a game approach. The game method is considered an innovative way to build positive interactions between students and guidance and counseling teachers and increase student engagement in better understanding and managing their emotions.⁴

¹Suarti, Ni Ketut Alit, Farida Herna Astuti, I. Made Gunawan, Hariadi Ahmad, and Abdurrahman Abdurrahman. 2020. "Information Services to Minimize Students' Academic Anxiety." *UNDIKMA Community Service Journal* 1(2):111–17

²Octavia, Putri Neva, and Jamila Jamila. 2024. "The Effectiveness of Group Guidance Services Using Brainstorming Techniques to Reduce Academic Anxiety Levels of Students at Private Senior High School Pab 8 Saentis." *Journal of Educational Quality* 2(2):129–36

³Mizan, Mizan, and Loeziana Uce. 2025. "Managing Negative Emotions in the Context of Adolescent Education." *Educational Studies and Research Journal* 2(1):37–47

⁴Rasyidin, Maharani Umami, and Elia Flurentin. 2024. "Implementation of Experiential Learning to Improve Social-Emotional Skills in Students." *Journal of Integration and Innovative Harmony of Social Sciences* 4(6):2

One game that can be used in this classical guidance activity is a game that uses a "problem box." This problem box is one of the media in guidance and counseling services designed as a means for students to express their hopes, complaints, and various needs in writing. ⁵In this context, students are given the opportunity to write down their concerns or problems they are experiencing on a piece of paper which is then placed in the box. Next, these problems are discussed collectively so that students can understand that they are not alone in facing this academic challenge.

The interactive approach in the "Problem Box" game in classical guidance services is one effort to increase student motivation and enthusiasm in participating in guidance activities, and providing services using this media is considered effective for application to students ⁶. The purpose of classical guidance services accompanied by this game is that students can be more open in facing academic anxiety, they can obtain better strategies in managing stress and increase their readiness in facing madrasah assessments with confidence.

Research methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method approach, this method aims to explore and understand the phenomenon in more detail by emphasizing the meaning contained therein. According to Moleong in Safarudin, the qualitative research method is an approach that focuses on collecting data in descriptive form, both from oral speech and written texts resulting from interactions with research subjects or from observations of the behavior being studied ⁷. This method allows researchers to understand a phenomenon in depth by exploring the meaning contained in the experiences, actions, and perspectives of individuals involved in the research.

This study involved ninth-grade students at MTsN 1 Banyumas as the main participants. The data collection process was carried out through observation, interviews, and filling out the DCM, which was previously analyzed

⁵Sugianto, Akhmad. 2022. *Guidance and Counseling in Elementary Schools* . Media Nusa Creative (MNC Publishing)

⁶Anggraini, Kiki Marselia, Riski Sovayunanto, and Tri Cahyono. 2022. "Development of a Crossword Puzzle Game to Address Students' Academic Stress at Tarakan State Islamic Junior High School." *Reform: Journal of Education, Social, and Culture* 5(03):27–31

⁷Safarudin, Rizal, Zulfamanna Zulfamanna, Martin Kustati, and Nana Sepriyanti. 2023. "Qualitative Research." *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research* 3(2):9680–94

in depth to determine what should be implemented before, during, and after the implementation of classical guidance services. In the implementation of this service, the "Problem Box" simulation game method was used, designed to help students understand conflict resolution strategies in a more interactive way. Through this method, the study is expected to provide insight into the implementation, student reactions, and challenges faced in the implementation of classical guidance based on simulation games.

Results and Discussion

Classical guidance services based on the results of filling out the Problem Checklist (DCM) carried out by 36 grade IX I students at MTsN.1 Banyumas, found that as many as 28 students experienced anxiety when facing exams which was seen in the Problems with Lessons aspect in the statement point. This shows that academic anxiety, especially during madrasah assessments, is one of the problems faced by many students, where high anxiety in facing exams can have a negative impact on concentration, understanding of the material, and students' overall academic performance.

Before the classical guidance activities are carried out, a Service Implementation Plan (RPL) is first prepared to support activities in the classroom, in this RPL there is an initial assessment in the form of filling in five statements regarding the anxiety felt by students. With the results of the initial assessment showing that most students experience anxiety and feel unprepared to face the exam, in addition before the service begins an apperception or brainstorming session is held regarding the readiness and anxiety they experience and there are still many students who feel confused about how to overcome the anxiety they feel. The results of this needs assessment become a common basis in determining classical guidance topics, so that the topics chosen are in accordance with student needs while supporting the achievement of independence as the goal of guidance and counseling services ⁸.

In response to these issues, a classroom tutoring service using the Problem Box Game method was implemented to help students understand and manage their anxiety more effectively. The Problem Box Game is a technique

⁸Muhammad, Abdullah. 2024. "Classical Guidance Services: Classical Guidance Services Using Group Discussion Techniques for Student Career Preparation." *At-Taujib; Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling* 2(2):174–84

that allows students to express their feelings and thoughts related to exam anxiety openly and without pressure. This method encourages students to explore the causes of their anxiety, share experiences with classmates, and find appropriate strategies for managing anxiety before and during exams. Following the classroom tutoring session, a reflection session is held where students gain a better understanding of the anxiety factors they face and strategies for overcoming them.

Academic Anxiety and the Application of the Problem Box Game Method in Classical Guidance Services

Academic anxiety is a psychological condition that arises when someone feels worried or stressed when facing an academic situation that is considered challenging or difficult to resolve. Khairunnisa explains that academic anxiety occurs when students feel threatened by academic demands in the form of assignments, exams, or expectations from their surroundings. This condition often arises due to fear of failure or inability to meet set standards⁹. Academic anxiety factors in students are influenced by pressure to achieve optimal results arising from themselves, parental demands, and the surrounding environment. For example, some teachers give exam with pressure that can trigger anxiety students, so that hinder development self And performance they are at school¹⁰

This anxiety often arises from feelings of unpreparedness for exams or assignments and a fear of failure, which impacts students' self-esteem. High parental expectations and competition with classmates exacerbate this condition. Furthermore, a lack of thorough preparation for academic activities such as madrasah assessments and uncertainty regarding the results are also key triggers. An unsupportive environment, such as limited academic guidance and stress from personal issues, further contribute to students' anxiety¹¹.

As for the factors that are felt by student class IX I in face exam covers a number of aspect main . *First* , pressure time become obstacles that make

⁹Khoirunnisa, Khoirunnisa, and Septi Gumiandari. 2023. "Reducing Academic Stress of NU Lemahabang High School Students Using Self-Instruction and Self-Efficacy Techniques." *JIIIP- Journal of Educational Sciences* 6(2):887–95

¹⁰Maksud, Amlul. 2023. "The Effect of Group Counseling with Assertive Training Techniques on Self-Actualization." *At-Taujib; Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling* 1(2):58–66

¹¹Vannesa, Sylvia. 2023. "The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Exam Anxiety in Students at Smp N 8 Muaro Jambi."

student feel in a hurry in finish question so that can influence accuracy they . *Second* , level difficulty various questions often become factor affecting anxiety especially for students who feel not enough Ready or experience difficulty in understand material . *Third* , instructions insufficient exam clear can cause confusion so that student need time addition only For understand Meaning from questions given . *Fourth* , form various questions Also influence readiness student especially If they Not yet used to with pattern questions used in exam . *Fifth* , lack of trust self make student hesitant in answer And not enough Certain with ability they Alone ¹².

Self-confidence is a crucial personality trait in human life, including in academic settings. For students, high self-confidence helps them approach exams with greater calm and optimism. Conversely, a lack of self-confidence can be a major factor triggering exam anxiety. Students who doubt their abilities tend to feel tense, have difficulty concentrating, and easily panic when faced with questions they perceive as difficult. Furthermore, low self-confidence can lead students to focus more on the possibility of failure than on strategies for successfully completing the exam. As a result, they may have difficulty remembering material they've studied or even doubt their correct answers.

The impact of academic anxiety is significant on various aspects of students' lives, especially when facing exams. Students who experience academic anxiety often have difficulty concentrating, easily feel tired, and experience prolonged stress. If left untreated, this condition can affect students' psychological well-being and reduce their motivation to learn . ¹³Therefore, it is important for students to have strategies to manage academic anxiety before exams, such as implementing structured study techniques, seeking social support from friends or teachers, and engaging in activities that can provide a relaxing effect to reduce stress. With this classical guidance, it is hoped that students will gain a better understanding of academic anxiety and how to overcome it so they can better face madrasah assessments.

¹²Situmorang, Herny, Sonia Kristi Br Sinuraya, Futri Elisabet Sidabutar, Raja Adi Bas Kami Gulo, and Nesa Syalom Br Kaban. 2025. "A Qualitative Study of Academic Anxiety of 9th Grade Junior High School Students Before Exams." *Lapake Jurnal* .

¹³Hidajat, Helga Graciani, and Raissa Dwifandra Putri. 2024. *Motivation and Digital Creativity in Academic Mental Health* . NEM Publisher

Classical Guidance Services in Counseling

Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 111 of 2014 concerning organization Guidance And Counseling state in Article 3 that service guidance And counseling aim For help counselee in reach optimal development and form comprehensive independence in aspect personal , social , academic , and career . Meanwhile that , Article 6 explains that service guidance And counseling consists of from four component main , namely : (a) service basic ; (b) service interest And individual planning ; (c) services responsive ; and (d) service support system . Service base This play a role important in give support preventive And development potential students so that they can face various challenge academic and social . In its implementation service base covers various activities that can be done done by counselor or BK teachers, such as assessment needs , guidance groups , information media management , guidance classical as well as other ¹⁴BK services

Classical guidance services are basic services in counseling provided to large groups of students or individuals with the aim of providing a general understanding of relevant psychological or academic issues ¹⁵. This service is provided simultaneously and in a structured manner in a forum or guidance session attended by several participants simultaneously. In other words, classical guidance is also a component of guidance and counseling services that are organized in the form of learning activities .¹⁶

The main objective of classical guidance is to provide students with an understanding of themselves and their surroundings, develop social skills and strategies in facing academic and life challenges, and prevent various problems

¹⁴Muhammad, Rifqi. 2021. "Analysis of the Implementation of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 111 of 2014 Concerning Guidance and Counseling." *Educational Scientific Journal* 7(1):53–65

¹⁵Seprianto, Seprianto, Fadila Fadila, Dina Hajja Ristianti, and Beni Azwar. 2024. "Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services in Realizing Student Psychological Well-being at SMPIT An-Nida." *Muhafadzah* 4(2):103–17.

¹⁶Yuliati, Emi. 2022. "The Application of Oral and Written Expository Methods in Classical Guidance Services to Improve Students' Understanding in the Field of Personal Services on the Topic of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Control Services, Semester 1, State Senior High School 4, Bima City Academic Year 2021/2022." *Indonesian Journal of Education and Learning (JPPI)* 2(2):180–89

that can hinder their development.¹⁷In an academic context, this service also plays a role in helping students increase their motivation to learn and adapt to school demands. This learning motivation functions as an inner drive for students that triggers the emergence of learning activities. If the motivation is low, then the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of students in participating in the learning process will also decrease¹⁸. In addition, classical guidance provides benefits in creating a school environment that supports students' psychology so that they can be more confident and independent in facing various academic situations. The implementation of this service is carried out through various methods such as lectures, discussions, simulations, and other interactive techniques. The process begins with planning materials tailored to students' needs based on student needs. Next, counselors or BK teachers provide services directly in class with an interesting approach and in accordance with student development. After the service is provided, an evaluation is carried out to determine its effectiveness and determine follow-up steps for students who need further attention.

In this classical guidance, material was presented on anxiety in facing madrasah assessments or exams. The initial activity was an apperception session through a brainstorming session where students were given the opportunity to share their experiences regarding their readiness for the exam and the anxiety they felt. The results discussion the found that Still Lots students who feel Confused in overcome the anxiety they have experience . By Because that , the material presented relevant with what are they feel covers explanation about definition anxiety , factors that can trigger anxiety moment exam as well as strategy effective in overcome it . Besides That various practical tips are also provided so that students can more believe self And calm in face exam like technique relaxation , management time Study as well as build pattern think positive. Delivery material done in PowerPoint (PPT) format displayed on screen projector provided for more interesting And easy understood by students

¹⁷Seprianto, Seprianto, Fadila Fadila, Dina Hajja Ristianti, and Beni Azwar. 2024. "Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services in Achieving Student Psychological Well-being at SMPIT An-Nida." *Muhafadzah* 4(2):103–17

¹⁸Hasmi, Nurmaida, Hasaniah Zulfihani, and M. Zuhdi Zainul Majdi. 2024. "The Positive Influence of Self-Talk in Increasing Learning Motivation." *At-Tanjib: Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling* 2(2):117–27

, in it student Also allowed For submit question related with the material presented .

Implementation of the Problem Box Game in Classical Guidance

Games provide opportunities for individuals to express aggression in a form that is acceptable to social norms, Milberg in Andriani explains that this research concept is in line with the theory that states that play activities, including games designed by humans, function as a vessel to channel anger and hostile impulses in a more controlled and socially acceptable form. Games basically reflect natural human responses in dealing with conflict, such as defense or fight mechanisms, but in a safer and more structured environment ¹⁹.

In the context of guidance and counseling, this principle can be applied through educational games such as the Problem Box in classical guidance, the problem box is one of the instruments in guidance and counseling which is used to accommodate various student aspirations in written form ²⁰. This tool is a box-shaped tool that allows students to express their hopes, needs, and concerns. In this context, the information gathered from the problem box can be used as a reference in designing guidance materials that better suit students' needs. This helps identify frequently occurring issues among students and presents them in a classroom setting to further develop students' understanding of the problems they face.

Game This is part from Experiential Learning, namely method student-centered learning on participant educate And emphasize experience direct as method most effective ²¹learning . This is in line with opinion previously that is with experience Alone something draft student more easy understand material , improve skills think critical , and strengthen Power remember . Besides That method This help they reflect experience , evaluate strategy , and develop solution more Good . Experiential Learning does not only increase

¹⁹Andriani, Fitri, and Abdullah Siring. 2023. "Increasing Student Motivation to Participate in Classical Counseling Guidance with the Tebag Kata/Style Game Technique of Class XI Students of SMA Negeri 5 Makassar." *JOURNAL OF THINKING AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENT* 5(3):235–39.

²⁰Siregar, Rasyid Ridho, Maulana Hasan, and Ridho Ardiansyah. 2023. "Guidance and Counseling at Mtsn 1 Rantauprapat." *Al Ittihadu* 2(1):22–32

²¹ Lestari, Indah, Santoso Santoso, and Any Rahmawati. 2022. "Strengthening Self-Confidence Character Through Classical Guidance Services with Experiential Learning." Pp. 524–29 in *Proceedings of the National Postgraduate Seminar* . Vol. 5

understanding academic but Also build skills social , trust self , and useful problem-solving in life daily .

Before starting the Problem Box game, the activity began with an *ice-breaking session* aimed at fostering enthusiasm and creating a pleasant atmosphere for students. This *ice-breaking session* was designed to make students feel more relaxed, increase social interaction, and reduce any tension they might feel before participating in the main activity. With this activity, students became more open in participating and were ready to be actively involved in the problem box game that would be played. The problem box game method was implemented in the form of an interactive group discussion, students were divided into several small groups and each was given a sheet of paper to write down the factors that caused their anxiety during the exam. After completion, the sheets were collected in a box and then randomly distributed to other groups. Each group was responsible for discussing the problems they received and formulating strategies that could help overcome academic anxiety. The results of the discussion were then presented in front of the class so that all students could gain insight into various ways to manage anxiety during exams.

This method not only encourages students to think critically in finding solutions, but also creates a more emotionally supportive environment, by training critical thinking skills in learning will form students who are skilled in developing new, original ideas and building a deep understanding of the concepts taught. With this ability students can analyze , evaluate and connect various concepts thoroughly so that their understanding is stronger. In addition, critical thinking also helps in solving problems logically and systematically and increases the power of innovation that is useful in various aspects of life ²². In addition, this method also helps students in understanding and managing the academic anxiety they face, this method also contributes to improving communication skills, cooperation, and empathy between students. Where creating a more supportive classroom environment, which ultimately can increase student confidence in facing exams. With this positive social interaction, students are better able to develop adaptive strategies to face their academic challenges.

²² Gulo, Christiani Des Marindra, and Abdul Muhid. 2024. "The Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzle-Based Learning to Improve Students' Critical Thinking Skills: Literature Review." *PINUS: Journal of Learning Innovation Research* 10(1):11–22

As an evaluation step after the implementation of classical guidance, students were given five reflective questions related to the material that had been delivered. They were also asked to write an exam preparation plan that included study strategies, study schedules, and ways to manage stress before the exam, this plan was presented in an interesting creative form as a form of student self-expression. This activity was carried out to function as a form of follow-up to measure the extent to which students understood and applied the strategies that had been learned. The results of the implementation of this method showed that students who participated in classical guidance services with the Problem Box game experienced an increase in their skills in managing academic anxiety, they became better able to recognize the triggers of anxiety they faced and develop strategies to overcome them, in addition, a more open and supportive classroom atmosphere also had a positive impact on students' psychology as a whole.

This approach is supported by Santoso and Wahyudi in Firdaus, whose research revealed that using games as a learning medium can improve students' understanding of emotions, social skills, and problem-solving abilities. Specifically designed games, such as role-playing and team-based games, enable adolescents to more easily recognize, understand, and manage their emotions in a relaxed and supportive environment.²³

Based on the various opinions above, the Problem Box game can be an effective method in helping students manage academic anxiety. With an interactive approach, students can explore the causes of anxiety and discover strategies to overcome it. However, this method should be combined with other approaches to obtain optimal benefits, as each student has different needs, requiring a variety of guidance strategies to ensure maximum results.

Conclusion

Academic anxiety is often experienced by students, especially before madrasah assessments and can negatively impact concentration, understanding of the material, and academic achievement due to academic pressure, high

²³ Firdaus, Maylia, Sapta Meiningsih, and Elisabeth Christiana. 2024. "Implementation of Fortune Teller Origami Games as a Medium for Managing Junior High School Students' Emotions in Group Guidance Services." *Helper Journal of Guidance and Counseling* 41(2):94–105

expectations, and lack of preparation. Classical guidance services with the Problem Box game approach help students express concerns and find solutions together, as well as increase emotional support in the school environment. Through group discussions, students learn to understand the triggers of anxiety and strategies for overcoming it, so they become more confident and better prepared .

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