



ANALYSIS OF THE DESIGN OF A PREVENTIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM TO REDUCE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ANXIETY

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Abstract :

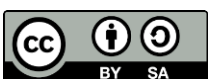
This study aims to analyze the design of a preventive guidance and counseling program in efforts to reduce students' academic anxiety. Academic anxiety is one of the psychological problems frequently experienced by students and has the potential to hinder academic achievement, learning motivation, and emotional well-being. A preventive approach in guidance and counseling services is considered strategic because it focuses on preventing problems from emerging before they develop into more complex disorders. This research employed a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with guidance and counseling teachers, observations of service activities, and documentation studies of program planning. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data display, and thematic conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that an effective preventive guidance and counseling program design to reduce academic anxiety includes components such as students' needs assessment, formulation of measurable objectives, development of service materials based on coping skills and stress management, collaborative implementation strategies involving subject teachers and parents, and continuous evaluation. The approaches applied in the program include classroom guidance services, group counseling, and emotional regulation skills training. These findings emphasize that a systematic, contextual, and needs-based program design can serve as an effective preventive strategy in minimizing academic anxiety and supporting the optimal academic and personal development of students.

Keywords : Preventive Guidance and Counseling, Academic Anxiety, Guidance and Counseling Program Design

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in optimally developing students' potential in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. However, in practice, the educational process is often marked by various academic pressures that may lead to psychological problems among students. One of the most common issues found in school settings is academic anxiety. Academic anxiety is an emotional condition characterized by feelings of fear, worry, tension, and lack of self-confidence related to academic demands such as examinations, assignments, presentations, and expectations of achievement from parents and teachers. If not properly addressed, academic anxiety can result in decreased concentration, low learning motivation, impaired academic performance, and even more serious mental health problems (Athia, H. A., Damayanti, N., & Venizya, A. Y., 2025).

Guidance and counseling play an important role in helping students develop adjustment abilities, coping skills, and emotional resilience. One relevant approach is preventive guidance and counseling, which refers to



services designed to prevent problems from emerging before they become more complex. The preventive approach emphasizes strengthening emotional regulation skills, stress management, effective learning strategies, and the development of a positive mindset toward academic challenges (Adhitama, G. P., Purwaningrum, R., & Hidayat, R. R., 2025).

A systematic and student-need-based design of preventive guidance and counseling programs is essential to ensure that the services provided are not merely reactive. A well-structured program should begin with a needs assessment, identification of the factors causing academic anxiety, and mapping of students' developmental characteristics. In this way, the interventions implemented can be targeted, measurable, and sustainable. The phenomenon of academic anxiety has increasingly intensified due to heightened educational competition, curriculum achievement demands, and social expectations regarding student performance. At various educational levels, many students exhibit symptoms such as difficulty sleeping before examinations, excessive fear of failure, and avoidance of academic tasks. These conditions indicate that academic problems are not solely related to intellectual ability but also to students' psychological readiness in facing learning demands (Amirullah, M., Nurmasari, Y., Permatasari, D., & Retnaningrum, W. R., 2022).

Academic anxiety continues to rise along with curriculum demands, academic competition, parental expectations, and outcome-based evaluation systems. Students experiencing academic anxiety tend to show symptoms such as difficulty concentrating, decreased learning motivation, sleep disturbances, and declining academic performance. If not addressed appropriately, this condition may lead to low self-confidence, avoidance behavior, and even more serious emotional disorders (Kolin, T., Waluwandja, P. A., & Olok, W., 2025).

In the educational context, Guidance and Counseling (GC) services have a strategic role in assisting students in overcoming developmental problems, including academic anxiety. A preventive approach in guidance and counseling is particularly important because it focuses on preventing problems before they develop into more complex issues. Preventive guidance and counseling programs are designed to equip students with emotional regulation skills, effective learning strategies, time management abilities, and strengthened academic resilience (Irawan, A., et al., 2024).

Within educational services, Guidance and Counseling also plays a crucial role in helping students develop self-adjustment skills and emotional regulation abilities. One relevant approach to addressing academic anxiety is through preventive counseling programs. The preventive approach aims to avert more complex problems by providing services that enhance coping skills, stress management, self-efficacy, and effective learning strategies before issues escalate into more serious disorders (Meilona & Lathifah, 2025).

Preventive guidance and counseling programs need to be designed systematically, structurally, and based on students' needs. A well-designed program should include a needs assessment, formulation of clear objectives, selection of appropriate intervention strategies, preparation of service materials,

and mechanisms for evaluating program effectiveness. Without careful planning, preventive services risk becoming less effective and misdirected. Therefore, analyzing the design of preventive guidance and counseling programs is essential to ensure that the developed programs genuinely address students' academic anxiety (Milda, A., Bunyamin, A., et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the development of modern counseling approaches emphasizes the importance of data-driven interventions and comprehensive approaches in school guidance and counseling services. This requires thorough evaluation and analysis of program planning so that services provided are not only reactive but also proactive and sustainable. Thus, analyzing the design of preventive guidance and counseling programs becomes a strategic step in improving the quality of guidance and counseling services and supporting the creation of a psychologically healthy and conducive learning environment (Nissa, F., & Primana, L., 2024).

An in-depth analysis of the design of preventive guidance and counseling programs specifically aimed at reducing students' academic anxiety is therefore necessary. This analysis is important to ensure that the designed program has a strong theoretical foundation, is relevant to students' developmental characteristics, and is effective in its implementation within the school environment. With an appropriate program design, guidance and counseling services function not only as problem solvers but also as facilitators of students' healthy psychological development and adaptability in facing academic demands (Ningrum, A. P., & Herdi, 2024).

Based on the above explanation, research on analyzing the design of preventive guidance and counseling programs to reduce students' academic anxiety is both relevant and essential. This study is expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of effective, systematic, and student-need-based guidance and counseling programs, thereby helping students manage academic anxiety optimally and improve the quality of their learning outcomes (Pertiwi, R. E., 2026).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design aimed at analyzing the design of a preventive guidance and counseling program in an effort to reduce students' academic anxiety. A qualitative approach was selected because the study focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of the planning, implementation, and conceptual rationale of the program designed by school guidance and counseling teachers within the real school context.

The research subjects consisted of guidance and counseling teachers, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, and several students identified as experiencing academic anxiety. Informants were determined through purposive sampling by considering their direct involvement in the design and implementation of the preventive program. The research site was selected based on the existence of a guidance and counseling program that specifically includes

preventive services related to students' academic issues, namely at MTSN 2 Bandung.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies of program documents, such as annual programs, semester programs, service units (satlan), and student needs assessment instruments. Interviews were conducted to explore perceptions, conceptual considerations, and preventive strategies implemented to reduce academic anxiety. Observations were carried out to examine the alignment between the program design and its actual implementation in the field. Meanwhile, documentation was analyzed to review the systematic planning, service objectives, materials, methods, and program evaluation.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking to confirm the consistency between the researcher's interpretations and the information provided by the informants. Data analysis was conducted interactively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis process was cyclical, beginning from data collection until credible findings were obtained regarding the strengths, weaknesses, and relevance of the preventive guidance and counseling program design in reducing students' academic anxiety levels. The results of the analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the program design structure, its alignment with students' needs, and recommendations for developing a more effective, systematic, and needs-based preventive guidance and counseling program. Sugiyono (2019).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that students' academic anxiety manifests in various forms, such as excessive worry about grades, fear of taking examinations, pressure from accumulating assignments, and low self-confidence in expressing opinions in class. Based on in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and the vice principal for curriculum affairs, academic anxiety is influenced not only by academic factors but also by parental expectations, a competitive classroom climate, and students' limited self-management skills in regulating time and emotions.

An analysis of the design of the preventive guidance and counseling program shows that the program implemented thus far tends to be reactive, focusing more on addressing students who already exhibit severe anxiety symptoms. Meanwhile, a systematic and structured preventive approach has not yet been fully integrated into the annual planning of guidance and counseling services. This is evident in the absence of regular student needs assessments, the limited implementation of initial psychological screenings, and the suboptimal collaboration between subject teachers and school counselors.

Based on these findings, the preventive guidance and counseling program design analyzed in this study emphasizes three main components: (1) classroom-based psychoeducational services on stress management and effective learning strategies; (2) group guidance services focused on strengthening coping skills

and emotional regulation; and (3) parental involvement through seminars and regular communication regarding healthy academic support patterns. This approach is designed comprehensively by considering students' developmental principles and a need-based assessment approach.

From the perspective of developmental counseling theory, preventive programs are considered more effective when implemented continuously and integrated with the school curriculum. Observational results show that students who participated in psychoeducational sessions and group guidance demonstrated improved understanding of how to manage anxiety, were able to create more structured study schedules, and showed increased confidence when facing academic evaluations. This indicates that preventive interventions not only reduce anxiety levels but also enhance adaptive learning skills.

Furthermore, the discussion of this study emphasizes that the success of a preventive guidance and counseling program design is strongly influenced by comprehensive school system support. Collaboration among counselors, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents is a key factor in creating a supportive learning environment. Thus, the analyzed program design is oriented not only toward individual students but also toward strengthening an educational ecosystem conducive to academic mental health.

Overall, the results of this qualitative study confirm that a structured, needs-based, and collaboratively implemented preventive guidance and counseling program is effective in reducing academic anxiety. The implications of this study recommend that schools develop sustainable, systematic, and integrated preventive service models within their annual guidance and counseling work programs.

Interview Results

The results of in-depth interviews conducted with guidance and counseling (GC) teachers, the vice principal for academic affairs, and several students indicate that academic anxiety is one of the dominant issues affecting students' learning processes. According to the GC teacher, academic anxiety generally arises before examinations, during class presentations, and when students face high grade expectations from parents and the school environment.

The GC teacher explained that the services provided so far have been primarily curative, addressing students after they show significant anxiety symptoms. "So far, we have mostly handled students who have already shown declining academic performance or frequently complain about low self-confidence. Preventive programs have not yet been systematically structured," stated one informant. This indicates that the preventive program design still needs strengthening in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

The vice principal added that signs of academic anxiety can be observed through behavioral changes such as difficulty concentrating, frequently asking permission to leave the classroom during lessons, and displaying excessive tension when teachers assign tasks. According to him/her, collaboration between subject teachers and GC teachers is necessary so that preventive efforts can be carried out earlier before anxiety develops into more serious disorders.

Meanwhile, students participating in the interviews revealed that they often feel afraid of failure, worried about receiving low grades, and anxious about being unable to meet their parents' expectations. One student stated, "Sometimes I have already studied, but I still feel afraid during exams. My mind just goes blank." This statement indicates that anxiety is not only related to academic readiness but also to psychological factors such as self-confidence and mindset toward failure.

Based on the interview findings, the required preventive guidance and counseling program design includes several key components: (1) periodic student needs assessments through questionnaires and observations; (2) classroom services on stress management and relaxation techniques; (3) training in effective study skills; (4) strengthening self efficacy and a growth mindset; and (5) parental involvement through parenting seminars on healthy academic support.

The GC teacher also emphasized the importance of using participatory and contextual approaches in implementing preventive programs. Programs should not be delivered solely through lectures but also through group discussions, role play, and exam simulations so that students gain direct experience in managing anxiety.

Overall, the interview results indicate that the design of a preventive guidance and counseling program to reduce students' academic anxiety needs to be comprehensive, systematic, and collaborative. The program must be based on students' actual needs, involve all school members, and be implemented continuously to create a learning climate that supports students' psychological well-being and academic success.

Observation Results

The observation results of this qualitative research on the Analysis of the Design of a Preventive Guidance and Counseling Program to Reduce Students' Academic Anxiety indicate that academic anxiety remains a fairly dominant phenomenon in students' learning lives. Based on direct observations in the school environment, some students displayed anxiety symptoms such as restlessness before exams, difficulty concentrating during lessons, hesitation in answering teachers' questions, and a tendency to avoid tasks perceived as difficult. These symptoms appeared in both low-achieving students and high-achieving students who set high personal standards of success.

Observations of the implementation of guidance and counseling services revealed that the ongoing program is still responsive and curative, primarily addressing students after problems arise. Structured and systematic preventive activities to prevent academic anxiety have not yet been fully integrated into the annual guidance and counseling program. Although classroom services have been implemented, the materials provided have not specifically focused on strengthening stress management skills, emotional regulation, or effective learning strategies as preventive measures.

Observations of interactions between GC teachers and students showed relatively open relationships; however, some students still felt hesitant to disclose

their academic anxiety. This indicates the need for a more proactive preventive program design, such as periodic needs assessments, the development of classroom guidance modules on academic anxiety, training in simple relaxation techniques, and collaboration with subject teachers to create a supportive learning climate.

In addition, observations found that environmental factors such as grade pressure, parental expectations, and competition among students contribute to the emergence of academic anxiety. Therefore, the preventive guidance and counseling program design needs to be developed comprehensively by involving all school stakeholders. The program should focus not only on students as individuals but also on strengthening the school support system through parent socialization programs and stress management workshops for teachers.

Overall, the observation results indicate that an effective preventive guidance and counseling program design to reduce students' academic anxiety should include needs assessment components, structured classroom service planning, coping skill strengthening strategies, periodic evaluation, and multi-party collaboration. A systematic and sustainable preventive approach is believed to reduce students' academic anxiety levels and create a more conducive learning environment that supports optimal student development.

Documentation Study Results

Based on the documentation study of various planning and implementation documents related to guidance and counseling services at the school, an overview of the preventive guidance and counseling program design aimed at reducing students' academic anxiety was obtained. The analyzed documents included the annual and semester GC programs, Service Implementation Plans (SIP), classroom service modules, student needs assessment instruments, service evaluation reports, and GC teacher reflection notes.

The analysis results show that the program design has been systematically prepared based on students' needs identified through initial assessments. In the needs assessment documents, academic anxiety emerged as one of the dominant issues experienced by students, particularly related to exam pressure, grade achievement demands, and fear of failure. These findings form the basis for formulating program objectives focused on strengthening emotional regulation skills, enhancing academic self-efficacy, and developing adaptive learning strategies.

Conceptually, the designed preventive guidance and counseling program positions classroom services as the primary strategy, supported by group guidance services and individual counseling for students with higher levels of anxiety. The Service Implementation Plan documents indicate that the service materials include understanding academic anxiety, relaxation techniques, time management, effective study skills, and positive coping strategies. The approach used tends to be psychoeducational and skill-based.

From a structural perspective, the planning documents include components such as objectives, materials, methods, media, activity steps, and evaluation. Program evaluation is designed in the form of process and outcome assessments,

such as anxiety level questionnaires before and after services, student reflection sheets, and observations of participation during activities. This indicates that the program design integrates systematic planning principles and is outcome-oriented.

However, the documentation study also found that not all documents contain specifically measurable indicators of success and that they are not fully supported by data-based follow-up analyses derived from evaluation results. In addition, integration between preventive programs and support from subject teachers and parents remains limited in the planning documents.

Overall, the documentation study results indicate that the preventive guidance and counseling program design has been structured and aligned with students' needs in reducing academic anxiety. This program has strong potential to support students' psychological well-being if complemented with more operational evaluation indicators and more planned and sustainable cross-party collaboration.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the qualitative research on the Analysis of the Design of a Preventive Guidance and Counseling Program to Reduce Students' Academic Anxiety, it can be concluded that the design of a preventive guidance and counseling program plays a strategic role in minimizing students' levels of academic anxiety when it is systematically structured, contextualized, and oriented toward students' needs. The findings indicate that students' academic anxiety is influenced by various factors, such as academic demands, parental and teacher expectations, a lack of time management skills, and low self-confidence.

An effective program design is characterized by a comprehensive needs assessment, the formulation of clear and measurable objectives, the selection of varied preventive service strategies (such as classroom guidance, group guidance, study skills training, and psychoeducation), and continuous program evaluation. A collaborative approach involving guidance and counseling teachers, homeroom teachers, and parents has also been shown to strengthen program implementation. The results emphasize that preventive guidance and counseling programs do not merely focus on addressing existing problems but prioritize prevention through strengthening coping skills, emotional regulation, and students' self-efficacy in facing academic demands. Therefore, a structured and needs-based program design is capable of creating a more supportive and conducive learning environment for students' psychological development.

Based on the research findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, guidance and counseling teachers need to conduct regular needs assessments to ensure that the preventive program design remains relevant to students' dynamics and characteristics. Second, schools should support program implementation through policies that encourage the comprehensive integration of guidance and counseling services into the overall school program. Third, it is necessary to enhance the professional competence of guidance and counseling teachers in designing data-based and evidence-based programs, particularly in

developing preventive interventions related to academic anxiety. Fourth, collaboration between schools and parents should be strengthened through socialization activities and mentoring to ensure that academic anxiety prevention strategies are implemented consistently both at school and at home. Finally, future research is recommended to develop a more applicable and empirically tested model of preventive guidance and counseling program design through mixed methods or experimental research approaches, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the program's impact on reducing students' academic anxiety.

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