

# The Time Management of Secondary School Students: Qualitative Analysis Via Psychoeducational Group Counseling Approach

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## Abstract

The main objective of this study is to examine the psychoeducational group counseling feedbacks in response to the issue of time management among secondary school students. This qualitative study employs case study as research design. A total of six subjects were purposively selected from a total population of 12 secondary school students enrolled at Pusat Tuisyen Rimbunan Ilmu, Ampang, in the state of Selangor, Malaysia. The criteria set of the subjects were secondary school students, aged between 13 to 16 years old, voluntarily to join, and having problems in managing time. Data was collected via interview conducted during group counseling sessions with respondents. Data gathered was analyzed thematically with the assistance of NVivo14 software. The results emphasized that all respondents need to carry out time management in such a way that suits them to obtain long lasting benefits in all aspects.

**Keywords:** Group Counseling, Psychoeducation, Time Management, School Students

## Introduction

Group counseling is a counseling session that is conducted with a small number of individuals who normally share topics or issues. The purpose of group counseling is to shape the guidance process and help and restore the problem situation faced. There are several benefits to the implementation of group counseling compared to individual counseling. It includes the benefits in terms of self-confidence. This is so because individuals who face a conflict within themselves do not feel alone in going through these obstacles, instead other group members also face the same problem with various challenges. In addition, the benefit through the implementation of group counseling is to increase the level of sensitivity to the needs of other individuals and increase trust and acceptance of others. Group counseling can also be implemented in diverse types of issues but some issues that are private and require individual counseling sessions are not encouraged to be implemented in groups.

For this study, the focus was on the issue related to time management among secondary school students. Time management is the most important aspect in the life of school students. This is due to the amount of time used at school is more than half a day, involving the teaching and learning process in the classroom and also the curriculum activities outside the classroom. This situation is becoming more critical when some parents send their children to tuition centers, music classes, self-defense and others, at night. Hence, some individual students state that 24 hours a day is insufficient for them to do all the necessary things (Ghafar & Weng, 2002). As a result, they were forced to sleep late to complete homework assigned by teachers. This situation causes students to engage in uncontrollable behaviors such as skipping school, turning up late to school, bullying, and others.

However, the problems faced by students do not all stem from less effective time management. Instead, there are also other factors that lead to changes in student behavior. According to Kirman et al. (2021), the three main factors are mass media, peers, and self-influence individual behavior. Therefore, this study needs to be conducted to address behavioral issues that can be attributed to the factor of inefficient time management among secondary school students.

### **Research Background**

The psychoeducational approach is a combination of psychology and education, implemented simultaneously to provide guidance in order to explore appropriate interventions among individuals or groups with problems. The success of the intervention can reduce the potential for an individual or group to focus on behavioral problems (Rani & Mahmud, 2019). In addition, the psychoeducational approach is also able to be delivered through a variety of charging and activities that correspond to the objectives that have been set. Such activities include painting therapy, psychodrama, music, and others. The psycho-educational approach is among the suitable approaches implemented to have a positive impact on groups that have problems in behavior and character. This is because the approach can have an impact holistically and not just on behavior alone, but also on human emotions. In addition, the psychoeducational approach has also been widely used in case studies involving behavior. This situation proves that there are approaches that can provide the life goals of individuals and groups in a more effective direction, while have effective social functioning and mental well-being. This situation is supported by Abdul Majid and Mahmud (2019) who stated that psychoeducation is functioning to assist individuals in going through life transitions which involve the process of finding, awakening, and researching everything that happens in daily life. Besides that, it is also indicated that psychoeducation not only affects the individual, but also restores the strength of human capital within the individual himself (Hani, 2015).

Group counseling, which is a psychoeducational intervention, is a counseling session that involves more than one client in a session and is led by one facilitator or counselor (Sani & Abd Razak, 2019). However, group counseling sessions still have the objective of helping, but it is more about helping a group that is facing the same problems. In addition, group counseling is a platform that plays a role in helping, awakening, and developing each individual members of the group (Aziz, Zakaria & Ab Razak, 2021). In addition, group counseling is an initiative and intervention that is suitable for solving problems (Che Latiff et al., 2018). According to American Psychological Association (2019), group counseling involves the participation of as many as five to 15 clients and the impact of group counseling on each group member includes an appreciation of the experience that is being gone through, each

individual has the opportunity to be assisted by the group member in dealing with the problem at hand.

Time management, on the contrary, is a step in planning the timing of each daily activity so that it is conducted within a reasonable period and does not disturb the life balance of an individual (Yusof, 2022). This concept is further confirmed by the statement that time management is an action that is carried out to achieve effective time management in helping to achieve the objectives of a particular activity. The word of Allah SWT in surah Al-Asr verses one to three also outlines about time,

*"By the time, verily, man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and they also advise with the truth and advise with patience."*

Concomitantly, the management of time is very important to avoid a person from being lost. This state of loss occurs when one's time is not managed properly, and all matters are carried out without looking at the level of importance or priority of the activities. As a result, the waste of time occurs without being realized. The acculturation of efficient time management highlighted by some countries like Germany, China and Japan shows that the significant importance to the accuracy of time (Yusof, 2022). Therefore, these countries are among the countries that are ahead of other countries in many aspects of their citizens' life. Therefore, the specific objectives of this study are mainly to explore

- a. how time management works among school students
- b. the effective actions in school students' time management strategy
- c. the perceptions of school students about personal time management

### **Methodology**

This qualitative research employed a case study as research design which aims for clear descriptions involving humans (Piaw, 2021). This design is chosen due to the characteristics possessed by the design that help the reviewer to make observations of human actions and behavior in certain situations and conditions. In addition, the observations made in case study are natural at the same time this provides an opportunity for the reviewer to make observations directly and continuously.

The respondents or subjects of the study were purposively sampled based on the criteria determined by the researchers. The criteria set namely, (1) the respondents are secondary school students, (2) the respondents are within the age range of 13 to 16 years old, (3) the respondents volunteer themselves to join the study, and (4) the respondents do having problems in managing time. A total of six respondents who were the students of Pusat Tuisyen Rimbunan Ilmu, Ampang, Selangor, was sampled to join the psychoeducational group counseling sessions for data collection.

The in-depth interview (administered during the group counseling sessions) was used for data collection for this study together with observation. Also, a group counseling psychoeducational module was built based on the objective of the study. The group counseling involved four sessions and held for 30 minutes to one hour for each session. The development of the psychoeducational module involves various methods of counseling modalities including art therapy and play therapy.

The data analysis was conducted thematically, in which the data obtained was scrutinized for the meaning and themes that aroused. The analysis was conducted with the assistance of NVivo14 software.

## Results

The demographic data of the respondents (as displayed in Table 1), revealed that there were five male and one female participated in the study. All respondents have ages within the range of 13 to 16 years, and each is a secondary school student. The involvement of the study respondents is to explore the ways of managing time among students, explore the effective action power in managing time and explore the mind of students through psycho-educational group counseling.

Table 1

*Respondents' Demographic Data*

Respondent Code	Gender	Age	School Level	Residential Status
R1	Female	14 years old	Secondary	Family home
R2	Male	16 years old	Secondary	Family home
R3	Male	13 years old	Secondary	Hostel
R4	Male	13 years old	Secondary	Hostel
R5	Male	13 years old	Secondary	Hostel
R6	Male	13 years old	Secondary	Hostel

Next, the results of this study is reported according to the three specific objectives of the study which are:

### *How time management works among school students*

There are five themes that have been found in the data analysis conducted, namely having no way of managing time, referring to friends' schedules, daily time schedules provided by parents, following dormitory schedules, and notebook. Some qualitative feedbacks that reflect these five themes are as follow:

- a. Not having a time management method – Respondents R1, R3, R5, and R6 stated that they do not have a specific way of managing their daily time. They do not have a way of managing time because they are already bound by the existing dormitory schedule and friends who are able to help in giving warnings and help to them if needed.

*"There is no teacher. There is usually no schedule. Sometimes WhatsApp to friends if I don't remember" – R1*

*"There is no teacher. I always look at what other friends are making, and I make it" – R3*

*"I have a schedule, teacher. I just remember it in my head. If the teacher tells me to write it down, I write it down. Even, sometimes I forget" – R5*

*"There is no teacher, I don't compile anything, I follow the dormitory schedule" – R6*

- b. Refer to friends' schedule – Respondents R1 and R3 chose to ask friends as a way of managing their time. This situation occurs because of the ease with which technology can be accessed by respondents easily and allows respondents to connect with other friends. In addition, the respondent's placement living in the dormitory caused the respondent to not take credit for important matters such as assignments because they had classmates who were with them in the dormitory.

*"There is no teacher. There is usually no schedule. Sometimes WhatsApp to friend if I don't remember" – R1*

*"There is no teacher. I always look at what other friends are making, and I make it" – R3*

- c. Daily time schedule provided by parents – Respondent R4 stated that the daily time schedule was her method of time management. The choice of this method is because the respondent's parents have provided the schedule. If the respondent does not comply with the schedule that has been provided. Respondents will receive punishment if they do not follow all the activities provided in the schedule.

*"Close to home, papa, mama have prepared a daily schedule for me to join" – R4*

- d. Follow the dormitory schedule – Respondent R6 stated that the way he manages his time is by following the schedule that has been provided in the dormitory. This is so because the respondent is a student living in a dormitory.

*"No teacher, I don't stack anything, follow the dormitory schedule" – R6*

- e. Notebook – Respondent R2 stated that notebook records are his method of management. The notes produced are for daily reference to facilitate his affairs. The notes produced are in the form of a list of assignment bushes. The respondent will mark the listed assignment once it is completed.

*"I use the notebook teacher. But not a schedule. I will do what I am going to do today from morning to night. When it's ready, I cut it" – R2*

#### *The effective actions in school students' time management strategy*

There are 13 themes that have been stated by respondents. Among them is reducing the time of playing smartphones, not cheating and returning smartphones to the guard. While the next theme is making early preparations, and the subtheme is preparing clothes for the week. The next theme is also prioritizing important activities, prioritizing lessons, going to bed early, not sleeping when the teacher teaches at school, having self-determination, changing daily time schedules monthly, setting goals on each assignment and doing things that interest you, as stated in their transcribed statements as follow

- a. Reduce smartphone playtime – Respondents R1, R5 and R6 stated that an effective action in time management was not having much time with their

smartphones. This scenario is due to the respondents spending most of the time playing games using their personal smartphones especially during school holidays. Whereas respondents who live in dormitories also use smartphones without the permission of the dormitory guards.

*"First, we need to separate important and unimportant objects. Then, do not play with your phone too much, and go to bed early every night" – R1*

*"Hmm...learn to be serious with Jamil, don't waste time playing games, haaaa...don't cheat the warden" – R5*

*"Work for a purpose. After that, what eak? Haa...I'll think of the most important thing first, like an egg. Last once, haaa...hmm...play games during free time je" – R6*

- b. Not deceptive – Respondent R5 stated that not cheating is one of the most effective actions in time management. This is so because respondents often choose to deceive their guards in the dormitory to get free use of smartphones. While the use of smartphones is only given on weekends only.

*"Hmm...learn to be serious with Jamil, don't waste time playing games, haaaa...don't cheat the warden" – R5*

- c. Return smart phone to guard – Respondent R3 stated that returning the smartphone to the warden was the best action to best manage time. This situation is due to the respondent often bringing in smartphones to the dormitory without the permission of the warden on non-school leave days.

*"Call home to the warden." – R3*

- d. Make early preparations – Respondent R4 stated that preparing assignments at school was a memorable action in time management. The assignment meant by the respondent is homework given by the teacher. The respondent stated so because he felt very busy at home additionally on days that have tuition classes.

*"I need to prepare homework at school" – R4*

- e. Prepare clothes for the week – Respondent R4 also stated that preparing clothes for the week is an effective action in ensuring time management is good. This situation is since the respondent is a student who will scrub all the clothes she wears, including daily clothes daily to ensure she is always neat.

*"I think I need to scrub for a week, I don't need to scrub for days." – R4*

- f. Prioritize important activities – Respondents R1, R2, and R6 stated that managing activity interests was an effective action. Respondents were able to explore the idea of organizing activity interests from the sessions conducted. Respondents

showed their intelligent reaction to the use of a time management schedule that divides important and unimportant activities.

*"First, we need to separate important and unimportant objects. Then do not play with your phone too much, and go to bed early every night" – R1*

*"No need to follow other people's ways, make what we like" – R2*

*"Work for a purpose. After that, what's the point? Haa...I think of the most important thing first, like an egg. Last once, hmm...play games during free time je"*  
– R6

- g. Put the lesson first – Respondents R3 and R5 stated that prioritizing lessons is an effective action force in time management. The choice of lessons as a priority was chosen by the respondents due to the impact that has been received by themselves. This situation includes academic achievements that are increasingly deteriorating due to active activities compared to other activities.

*"Study first" – R3*

*"Hmm... study hard with Jamil, don't waste time playing games, haaaa... don't cheat the warden" – R5*

- h. Early to bed – Respondent R1 stated that early sleep is an effective action force in time management. The choice of this action force is since the respondent often feels sleepy when she spends time at night playing on her smartphone. Consequently, the respondent would give the excuse that she was unhealthy and powerless to go to school.

*"First, we need to separate important and unimportant objects. Then, don't play with your phone too much, and go to bed early every night" – R1*

- i. Not sleeping when the teacher is teaching at school – Respondent R3 chose not to sleep when the teacher was teaching as an effective action in managing time. This is so because the daily activities that are often done such as playing online games until late in the morning cause him to get sleepy and fall asleep while the teacher is teaching.

*"Don't sleep near school" – R3*

- j. Have self-determination – Respondent R2 stated that not joining people is an effective action. This is so because the respondent is a student who likes to conduct activities according to his own likes and interests. Respondents are comfortable with this action power because they get support from their parents.

*"No need to follow other people's ways, make what you like" – R2*

- k. Change the daily time schedule monthly – Respondent R4 stated that the time schedule that changes monthly is an effective action in time management. This is so because the respondent wants variety in his daily time schedule so that he does not get bored and tired of doing it.

*"There needs to be a time schedule that I swap every month near my home. So that I don't get bored quickly" – R4*

- l. Set objectives for each assignment – Respondent R6 stated that producing work with clear goals is an effective action. The respondent expressed this action power because, he felt that he only followed the dormitory schedule and did not attach importance to each lesson assignment. His impression at school was low, he was once demoted due to deficient performance because of many assignments given by the teacher not being prepared, sleeping in class, and often leaving class when the teacher was teaching.

*"There's a purpose to work. After that, what is the point? Haa...I'll think of the most important thing first, like an egg. Last once, haaa...hmm...play games during free time je" – R6*

- m. Doing things that interest you – Respondent R2 made the determination that making things of interest is an effective action force in her self-care. The respondent stated that when he does activities that he is interested in and likes, then the tasks or activities can be done more easily and quickly.

*"No need to follow other people's ways, make what you like" – R2*

#### *The perceptions of school students about personal time management*

Among the insights that become the respondents' priority are getting ideas to improve themselves, realizing that a lot of time is wasted, smartphones are not the most important, and can get to know new friends. Findings are described in detail as follows

- a. Get ideas for self-improvement – Respondents R2, R3, and R5 found that the idea of improving oneself through this study session was a good one. Respondents can also find out how other students manage their time and can be used as a guide for their own use in changing the existing way to be better and see the importance of each activity conducted.

*"What I got from this activity is that I don't waste time. Then, I can know how other people manage time. So, I might be able to use it later" – R2*

*"I got idea to use important and unimportant schedules for my day" – R4*

*"I got from this program; I can change myself to not join my friends to play phone until early morning" – R5*



- b. Realize a lot of time wastage is done – Respondents R1, R5 and R6 learned that they waste a lot of time in managing their daily time. Respondents spend a lot of time on useless and futile things daily, once again inviting shame on themselves.

*"Ohh, if teacher tells me to list, I just realized that I actually have a lot of time to waste. Before this, when facing the phone, I did not even think, I knew it was late. Maybe I can make the way teacher teach this for me to think about what activities I always do every day" – R1*

*"I got from this program; I can change myself to not join my friends playing phone until early morning" – R5*

*"But actually, I'm ashamed, because I play a lot in my schedule" – R6*

- c. Smartphones are not the most important thing – Respondents R3 and six got the sense that smartphones are not the most important in their lives. Respondents stated so because respondents always spend a lot of time with smartphones to play games or use social media accounts.

*"Ok, brother. What I got, I got to know that people who don't play games can live" – R3*

*"But actually, I'm ashamed, because I play a lot of without schedule" – R6*

- d. Make new friends – Respondent R4 got the common sense which is being able to get to know new friends through the session. The respondent causes this situation not having the opportunity to get acquainted with his group mates even though they are students studying at the same tuition center.

*"I got to know my friends" – R4*

## Discussion

The results obtained formulate that the way of managing time among students is different. However, students' awareness of the importance of management methods is still at a low level. This situation is influenced by numerous factors including exposure related to the way of managing time, freedom of use of technology, awareness of the importance of time, placement of students and the role played by all parties which is still not comprehensive. In addition, this statement is also supported by Yusof (2022) who stated that the average group of students today is too sensitive to gadgets, social media and games on smartphones and computers. Therefore, students stated that they do not have a specific way to manage time and use methods such as asking friends, daily time schedules, following dormitory schedules and notebook notes as their daily life practices. Therefore, there is also a statement by Andrew (2021) which states that among the methods that can be used in time management are using an online calendar, making plans, and making a list of assignments or notes related to things that need to be done. The way of managing time is an essential element in helping students achieve both academically and socially. In addition, wise time management can ensure affairs can be prepared more quickly and can avoid stress and pressure. Although

students know the effective ways to use time management, they prefer not to take it seriously.

Furthermore, the findings of the study on effective actionability in student time management show that the ideas published by students are influenced by the previous discussion sessions. This situation can be evidenced by the explanations by students in relation to the activities that have been carried out and some of the things that have been included in the discussion sessions. Among the actions that were brought up included not spending much time playing with smartphones, managing activity interests, prioritizing lessons, going to bed early, not sleeping when the teacher teaches, not cheating, having self-principles, returning smartphones to the guard, making a plan early, preparing clothes for the week, a time schedule that changes every month, setting goals for each activity, and making things of interest. According to Hassan (2019), effective action power in time management includes not neglecting tasks, setting activity goals, dividing daily activities according to needs, presenting time for each activity and implementing effective daily routines consistently. However, the implementation of effective action power proposed by students still cannot prove its effectiveness. This is so because, students only think and discuss effective action power in the management of time in the session only, otherwise it does not involve continuous implementation and receiving implications from the effective action power given.

In addition, the findings of the study in the elements of students' mindfulness in psychoeducational group counseling are ideas to improve themselves, waste a lot of time, smartphones are not the most important thing and can get to know new friends. The mind involves knowledge from intelligence and experience of the individual itself in assessing a problem that occurs (Tuan et al., 2010). Three of the insights expressed were related to time management while one was socially related. This situation proves that these psychoeducational group counseling sessions help students gain insight into their daily time management. Hence, most of the students highlighted the aspect of the idea of making self-change as a key insight. The insight gained is one element that shows respondents strive to live life more successfully if they continue to step in the ideas gained. This is so because a successful person forces himself to change, while a failed person is only forced to change (Ismail, 2017). In addition, the second mind also gives a hint that some students feel that they do waste time in a day with activities that are classified by them as unimportant and useless activities. The third line of reasoning is related to the high usage of smartphones by students. They realized that they spend a lot of time using smartphones for no particular purpose, instead being used for gaming and social media alone. The use of these smartphones unchecked and unattended by parents and individuals themselves causes lessons to be disrupted and unable to give full focus to the assignments given by teachers and as a result the assignments given cannot be prepared and interest in learning is disrupted (Wilayah, 2022). Therefore, the use of smartphones has benefits and disadvantages in their use, especially to students. Next, followed by socially related resourcefulness. The student felt that through this group counseling, he made new friends which caused him to feel that this session was greatly beneficial to him. This is so because this friendly relationship is done voluntarily i.e., no one can be forced to be friends with others (Kassim & Abdul Jalal, 2015).

### **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, students need to conduct time management properly by using methods or methods that suit each of them. The implementation of a practical way of managing time can have a positive impact on the student himself in various aspects. This scenario can also foster

critical thinking power towards students in making isolation activities and the level of importance of their implementation.

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