

Senior High School Students 'Understanding of Examination Skills and Its Implications for School Guidance and Counseling Services

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Abstract: The objectives of this study were to analyze the skills of students in taking the test and the differences in the skills in taking the exam between male and female students. This study used a comparative descriptive approach with a population of 970 students of SMA Negeri 13 Padang who were registered in January-June 2020 and a sample of 108 students who were selected using stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used was "Test-taking Skills Scale" with a validity $r=304$ and a reliability of 0.914. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and inferential statistics (t-test). The findings at SMA Negeri 13 Padang showed the students' skills in taking the test were classified as low, and there was no difference in the skills to take the exam between male and female students. The implications for guidance and counseling services will be discussed.

Keywords: Examination Skills, High School Students

Received July 23, 2020;

Revised August 3, 2020;

Accepted September 15, 2020;

Published October 2, 2020

Conflict of Interest Disclosures:

The authors declare that they have no significant competing financial, professional or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.



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How to Cite: Syafitri, R.A., Nirwana, H. (2020). Senior High School Students 'Understanding of Examination Skills and Its Implications for School Guidance and Counseling Services. JAIPTEKIN, 4 (3): pp. 162-168, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24036/4.34376>

Introduction

The learning process is an adaptation process to master learning material (Suardana, Putri, Simarmata, & Nicholas, 2013). For students mastering a material is important (Zubaidah, 2016), the achievement of mastery of a material can be known through an assessment of learning outcomes, namely exams (Wibowo, 2012). Exams are a phase that has an important contribution to life if they are done well it will give success, if they are not done seriously it will not be successful (Albas & Albas, 1988). Several countries have made examinations one of the graduation requirements for high school students (Ou, 2010).

The process of implementing exams in schools has an influence on the results of a student's passing, the existence of a passing rate standardized by the government creates positive perceptions and negative perceptions for students about exams (Warren & Grodsky, 2014). This will affect the psychological and physical condition of students when they are going to take exams at school (Ahmad, 2012). Every student

has different abilities during exams (Maxwell, 2014), feelings of fear, anxiety and confusion when exams make students abilities not optimal during exams (Holt, 2010).

The above is supported by phenomena that occur in the field, in the implementation of exams, many things can affect student test results. This is contained in the results of the group data recapitulation Problem Uncovering Tool (AUM) Prerequisites for mastery of subject matter, learning skills, learning facilities, personal circumstances, learning and socio-emotional environment (PTSDL) obtained from several schools in the city of Padang which are listed in the table.

Table 1. Data for the AUM PTSDL Group of Several Schools in Padang City

Field	Ideal Score	SMK N 3	SMA N 13	SMK N 6	SMA N 7	SMA N 2	SMK N 10	Mean
		X OTP 1	XII IPS 3	XI TKJ	X IPS	X MIPA 1	X NKPI A	
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%
P (20)	40	16,7	25,8	21,0	26,8	20,0	39,0	24,8
T (75)	150	12,5	39,6	36,5	37,6	33,2	10,8	28,3
S (15)	30	15,4	36,4	53,6	45,1	43,7	49,4	40,6
D (30)	60	16,4	39,6	34,1	37,4	31,2	33,3	32
L (25)	50	14,1	48,1	43,6	43,0	38,9	38,7	37,7

Table 1 illustrates that of the five AUM PTSDL fields, the Prerequisite field for mastery of subject matter is the field with the lowest percentage achievement among other fields. This shows that to be able to get good results during exams, mastery of learning material is needed, so that skills are needed to facilitate students in learning, especially skills in taking exams.

Exams are not just graduation, but determine whether the student is eligible or not to continue to the next level (Rizki, 2013). To be able to pass the exam, the most important thing for students to understand is the preparation for taking the exam (Fitria, 2013). Good exam preparation will make it easier for students to take the exam, besides that a positive view of the exam will prevent students from feeling afraid and anxious during the exam.

The existence of negative perceptions for students regarding examinations is a heavy burden (Yunita, Warsito, Darminto, & Lukitaningsih, 2013). This is due to demands from parents and the school as well as an internal desire not to fail and get high grades (Aini, Dyah, & Novitasari, 2016), which triggers anxiety and has an impact on exam results (Maisaroh, Nur, Falah, & Falasifatul, 2011). Therefore, it can be concluded that 2 factors affect student exams, namely, (1) lack of preparation when taking exams and (2) negative perceptions related to exams (Arici, 2018).

These two factors allow students to fail in exams (Swasti, Helena, & Pujasari, 2013). To be able to overcome this, the teacher must have a way to help students face exams (Arnold, 1995). In addition, students must master the skills needed to prepare for the exam (Forrest, 2010). Skills will help students use the right steps in the learning process and get good learning outcomes (Zahri, Yusuf, & Neviyarni, 2017). Mastery of learning skills in the form of test-taking skills will make it easier for students to take the test well. Skills can be mastered with a good training process and guidance from the right person. Teachers are people with the right competence to do so.

One of the educators who has a duty to prevent bad student behavior is the Guidance and Counseling (BK) teacher (Novrialdy & Atyarizal, 2019). The existence of BK teachers is very important for students, because BK teachers are assigned to guide students by using services that are able to prevent students from negative behavior (Nirwana, 2012). In this case, it is necessary to provide BK services with a more focused effort to prevent students from failing in exams in the future. The objectives of this study were, (1) to analyze students' skills in taking exams at school, (2) to analyze differences in test-taking skills between male students and female students.

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive method to describe students' skills in taking exams and to compare the skills of male and female students in taking exams. The study population consisted of 970 students of 13 Padang State Senior High School (SMA) who were registered in the even semester (January-June 2020), with the research sample were 108 (65 female and 43 male) students of class X and XI who were selected by the stratified random sampling technique. The use of sampling techniques is adjusted to the conditions of the population which consists of different levels. The research instrument used a scale of test-taking skills (pre-test, being-tested and post-exam) with a validity $r=304$ and a reliability of 0.914. The data analysis technique used in this study was descriptive statistics to analyze students' skills in taking exams at school, and inferential statistics (t-test) to analyze differences in test-taking skills between male and female students.

Results and Discussion

Based on the research results, obtained data about the skills to take the exam for high school students in the form of scores that were analyzed descriptively. To determine the level of measurement for high school students' understanding regarding test-taking skills, five categories are used, namely (1) very high, (2) high, (3) moderate, (4) low, (5) very low. The results of data processing can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. Exam Skills at SMA Negeri 13 Padang (n = 108)

No	Category	Score Interval	Mean	Frequency	%
1	Very high	≥ 131	0	0	0
2	High	101 - 130	15	16	15
3	Moderate	71 - 100	34	35	32
4	Low	41 - 70	45	47	44
5	Very low	≤ 40	10	10	9
Total			104	108	100

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that in general the understanding of high school students about exam skills is 44% in the low category and 32% in the moderate category. Thus, it can be concluded that the understanding of the majority of high school students about test-taking skills is in the low category. These results indicate that there are still many students who do not have a good understanding of test-taking skills. Furthermore, in more detail the understanding of high school students about the skills to take the test based on the sub variables can be seen in the next table.

Skill Level in Taking Examination from the Aspect of Pre-Test

Table 3. Exam Skills from the Aspect of Pre-Test (n = 108)

No	Category	Score Interval	Mean	Frequency	%
1	Very high	≥ 46	2	2	2
2	High	35 - 45	12	12	11
3	Moderate	24 - 34	51	53	49
4	Low	Des-23	39	41	38
5	Very low	≤ 12	0	0	0
Total			104	108	100

The results showed that the level of test-taking skills for high school students in the pre-exam aspect was in the medium category, with an achievement percentage of 49%. These results illustrate that students are only able to master a portion of the skills to take the pre-test aspect of the exam. The lower the mastery of the skills to take the test aspects of the pre-test for students, the lower the effectiveness of the test skills that students have. This is because the pre-test aspect plays an important role as a first step for students to prepare for the exam. Lack of student preparation in taking exams will make students experience many

obstacles that come from within themselves (Ahmad, 2012). The inability of students to prepare properly when taking exams will make students feel afraid and worried if they do not pass the exam (Solehah, 2012). One of the failures experienced by students in taking exams is caused by the inability of students to prepare themselves properly when taking exams (Nurlaila, 2011).

Level of Skill in Taking the Exam from the Aspect of Being Examined

Table 4. Exam Skills from the Medium Aspect of Examination (n = 108)

No	Category	Score Interval	Mean	Frequency	%
1	Very high	≥ 50	0	0	0
2	High	39 - 49	14	15	14
3	Moderate	28 - 38	43	45	42
4	Low	17 - 27	37	38	35
5	Very low	≤ 16	10	10	9
Total			104	108	100

The findings based on the data analysis of high school students' test-taking skills showed that the test-taking skills from the medium aspect of the exam were in the medium category with an achievement percentage of 42%. These results show that the mastery of the skills to take the exam in the medium test is better than the mastery of the skills to take the test in the pre-test. Effective test-taking skills can occur if students have good test-taking skills from the pre-test and on-being aspects. The aspect of being tested is an advanced stage that students must go through when taking the exam. A student will succeed in his studies if there is a desire to want to learn (Astuti, 2015), failure to face exams is not only influenced by student unpreparedness, but more due to stress and fear of facing exams (Nurlaila, 2011). Students need the ability to be able to be calm and use their time as well as they do on exams (Evans, 2009).

Skill Level in Taking Examination from the Aspect of Post-Exam

Table 5. Exam Skills from the Aspect of Post-Exam (n = 108)

No	Category	Score Interval	Mean	Frequency	%
1	Very high	≥ 50	0	0	0
2	High	39 - 49	8	8	7
3	Moderate	28 - 38	16	17	16
4	Low	17 - 27	66	69	64
5	Very low	≤ 16	13	14	13
Total			104	108	100

The findings based on the data analysis of high school students' test-taking skills showed that the post-exam skills from the post-test aspect were in the low category with a percentage of 64%. This result shows that mastery of the skills in taking the test in the post-test aspect obtained the lowest percentage achievement compared to the other two aspects. Effective test-taking skills can occur if students have the skills to take exams from the pre-exam, on-exam and post-test aspects. The post-exam aspect is the final stage that students must go through when taking the exam. When the exam is over, take a break and correct yourself and think about the results that will be obtained, become a reference so that you can be even better in subsequent exams (Anderson, 2005).

Level of difference in test-taking skills between male and female students

Table 6. Differences in test-taking skills between male and female students (n = 108)

No	Gender	N	Mean	Std.Deviasi	Std. Error Mean	Category
1	Male	43	73,09	19,2	2,93	Moderate
2	Female	65	72,62	19,5	2,42	Moderate

Table 6 illustrates that the level of skills to take the test for male students is in the medium category with an average of 73.09. While the skills to take the exam for female students are in the medium category with an average of 72.62. The results of the analysis conducted proved that the male students had a higher level of examination skills compared to female students. All individuals are born with the potential and ability to develop this potential (Deporter & Hernacki, 2013). Difference is a natural thing, including how to learn and the results they get in learning. So instead of that, one of the efforts to make students get good results when taking exams is to strive for students to have good test-taking skills.

Table 7. T-test for male and female students' taking test skills at SMA Negeri 13 Padang (n=108)

No	Value	N	F	Sig.	Std. Error Mean	t
1	Equal variances assumed	108	0,135	0,714	3,82	0,125

Table 7 illustrates that the F value for gender with equal variance assumed is 0.135 with a significance of 0.714. Because the probability > 0.05 , it shows that the two variances are the same. Therefore, the t-test value to be used is based on the equal variance assumed value. Based on the t-test value obtained, it can be seen that the t-test achievement is 0.125 with a significance of 0.714. Therefore the significance is $0.714 > 0.05$, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in test-taking skills between male and female students.

The results of statistical tests using the t-test show that there are significant differences in test-taking skills for students between male and female students. In essence, all individuals are created with their own characteristics, many factors influence students' learning abilities (Zagoto, Yarni, & Dakhi, 2019). However, in this study there was no significant difference in test-taking skills between male students and female students, it is presumed that the differences between students are something that affects student learning outcomes and methods. Therefore, in order to get good exam results, male students and female students are expected to have good test-taking skills.

Implications for Guidance and Counseling Services in Schools

Currently the examination process that is passed will be more effective if students can understand the three aspects of test-taking skills. Based on the research results, it was found that there was still a lack of student skills in taking exams, this could be the spotlight of BK teachers in schools to strive to provide services that support test-taking skills for students. Having students' skills will be more effective in completing assignments (Ningsih, 2014).

Based on the description above, the role of guidance and counseling teachers is very important to provide understanding to students regarding test-taking skills. Guidance and counseling services have long been seen by experts as an integral part of the education system in schools (Marjohan, 2013). This can be realized through the implementation of programs in BK services in schools, one of which is through information services (Rambe, Mudjiran, & Marjohan, 2017). Information services are a type of service in guidance and counseling that can help students develop themselves (Sudirman, Mudjiran, & Rusdinal, 2016).

In addition, guidance and counseling teachers can facilitate media that can be used to support information service materials related to test-taking skills that will be given to students. There are many media that can be used to facilitate students, one of which is using modules. The guidance and counseling module will make it easier for counseling teachers to carry out their (Rhepon, Nirwana, & Marjohan, 2016). Using modules will provide opportunities for students to study (Yandri, Daharnis, & Nirwana, 2013), by utilizing modules, it is hoped that BK teachers can optimize service delivery so that students have the skills to take exams and get good exam results.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion of the findings, overall student examination skills at SMA Negeri 13 Padang are in the low category. Examination skills from the pre-test, being-tested and post-exam aspects are in the medium and low categories. And there is no significant difference in test-taking skills of male and female students. However, there are still many students who need further understanding of test-taking skills. One of the efforts that can be made to overcome this is to improve student examination skills. Students need help and support from various parties, including counseling teachers. Counseling teachers can facilitate students in taking exam skills through various guidance and counseling services by utilizing various media such as modules.

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