

The efficiency of group dynamics and methodical desensitization techniques in marriage counseling to lessen prospective brides and grooms anxiety

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Keyword : Anxiety; marriage counseling; systematic desensitization.	Abstract Marriage is a bond between a man and a woman to form a new family. However, the problem is that not everyone immediately finds a suitable partner and is sure about deciding to get married. The purpose of this study is to evaluate how well marriage counseling employs group dynamics and desensitization techniques to lessen prospective brides' and grooms' anxiety. An ABA design is used in this single-subject study. Four people participated in this study: two prospective brides and two prospective grooms. Descriptive analysis is added to visual analysis, also known as visual inspection, in data analysis. The study's findings demonstrate that systematic desensitization techniques combined with relaxation therapy can effectively lower prospective brides' and grooms' anxiety levels. The outcomes both before and after treatment demonstrate this. Counselors and other caregivers may utilize this method as an alternative to help prospective brides and grooms feel less anxious.			
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INTRODUCTION

Marriage has quite big benefits for social life. One of these benefits is to maintain human survival, protect offspring, keep society safe from all kinds of potentially life-threatening diseases, and maintain peace of mind. Marriage in Islam has a noble purpose by perfecting worship and creating a happy family in this world and the afterlife. This is in accordance with the words of Article 1 of Marriage in Law Number 1 of 1974. Marriage is a bond between a man and a woman to form a new family. However, the problem is that not everyone immediately finds a suitable partner and is sure about deciding to get married (Aulia & Widyana, 2022). Various reasons that arise in the mind are not confident, feeling less beautiful, less handsome, less established, afraid of not being able to provide for themselves, afraid of not being able to take care of children, afraid of giving birth, not being compatible, or feeling that other people are not worthy of being their partner, not yet fully responsible (R. R. Pratiwi et al., 2022). Answered to parents, not yet finished getting career targets, traumatized by previous romance. The incidents described above often occur in everyday life. All of this certainly cannot be separated from the role of family and environment (H. Pratiwi et al., 2023). The family plays a big role in contributing premarital education to individuals from childhood to adulthood, through observation and through the circumstances felt by the individual (Rofiq et al., 2021).

Determining the decision to get married certainly requires good planning, if you don't have good planning it will certainly result in the prospective bride and groom experiencing doubts in deciding on a choice that they think is the best, which in this case is deciding to formalize their relationship with marriage (Whitaker, 2019). All problems that hinder marriage must have a cause. This is what parents must prepare for their children, teenagers, and people who are preparing for marriage. Whatever the obstacles, they can be resolved so that every individual or couple can get married, with thorough preparation in terms of physical, psychological, economic and religious aspects. This is very important for a harmonious and happy family (Hetkamp et al., 2020).

Marriage is an event that may seem very simple. In Islamic teachings, marriage is as simple as reciting the shahada and marriage vows (Marini et al., 2023). However, even though it seems simple, the meaning contained in it is extraordinary, and it could be said that this is a very sacred moment for a human being to carry out (Carpio et al., 2022). Anxiety, both before, during, and after a wedding, is one of the many psychological symptoms that can be caused by major life events such as marriage (Baba et al., 2020). Not everyone who is physically ready to get married is ready to lead the wedding procession. While many prospective brides and grooms who are physically mature and financially stable are ready to get married, they are not necessarily ready to lead the wedding procession (Whitaker, 2019). The inability to marry does not only come from a material perspective, but is related to mental and emotional problems, the most significant of which are feelings. There are various feelings of not being ready to face this wedding procession, including feelings of laziness, sadness, fear, tension, and so on (Putri & Septiawan, 2020).

Anxiety is a type of psychological disorder. Anxiety is a psychological symptom that can make it difficult for prospective brides and grooms to prepare for their wedding (Adiwena et al., 2023). The bride and groom may be reluctant to get married because they are anxious about the wedding process (Llorent-Bedmar et al., 2020). This anxiety is certainly influenced by several factors. According to psychoanalytic theory, the emergence of anxiety is caused by bad pressure from past behavior and mental disorders. And if viewed from a cognitive theory perspective, anxiety occurs due to negative self-evaluation, as well as negative feelings about one's abilities and negative self-orientation. Meanwhile, in the view of humanistic theory, anxiety is worry about the future, worry about what must be done in the future (Rofiq et al., 2021).

Internal and external factors are common causes of anxiety. Individual circumstances, negative past experiences, fear of failure, and irrational thinking are examples of internal factors (Dyantari & Simarmata, 2023). Then there are external factors such as financial problems, lack of education, partners who are not yet working, infidelity, and family interference in their home. This is clearly not good and is detrimental to the bride and groom (Hamidi et al., 2010). Apart from that, if the prospective bride and groom's anxiety increases, it will affect the person's autonomic nerves and injure several of their body organs. Apart from being the focal point of hypochondria, nervousness takes part in the psychophysiological derangement that is seen as an actual, specific disease (S. Zahra et al., 2018). Naturally, it poses a serious threat. Therefore, planning the mental state before choosing marriage for married couples is very important. because building a Sakinah family really depends on psychological factors. They will have difficulty facing various possibilities

that will arise in married life later if the husband and wife do not have adequate psychological preparation (Hetkamp et al., 2020).

Therefore, it is important before carrying out the wedding procession to carry out a psychological examination on the prospective bride and groom, or carry out pre-marital guidance and counseling or marriage counseling, so that you can find out the condition of the prospective bride and groom and overcome the level of anxiety experienced by the prospective bride and groom, so that when the wedding day approaches, the bride and groom are not feeling excessive anxiety, which can disrupt the physical and psychological condition of the bride and groom, so that it doesn't hinder the ongoing wedding procession (Lu et al., 2020). Readiness for marriage is raised through a truly thorough interview process or as a whole through a learning cycle, both post-operative interviews conducted by the family and by organizations such as the Tight Business Office (KUA). Initial preparation aims to understand the information and understanding of prospective wives and husbands related to marriage, family, solid proliferation, taking care of family problems, developing beliefs, piety, morals, requests for love, and strict schooling in the family (Pathan, 2016). The goal is that every newlywed couple can create a family that is *sakinah, mawaddah, and warahmah*, minimizing the occurrence of divorce in the household (Rofiq et al., 2021).

As a means of helping two different couples understand and communicate with each other, learn how to deal with conflict, and resolve problems, marriage counseling is very important. When it comes to marriage, this ability is very important (Ginting et al., 2023). The bride and groom will gain skills for effective communication and conflict resolution through premarital or marriage counseling. Marriage counseling allows couples to discuss their beliefs, values, goals, hopes, parenting, and financial roles in a safe, serious, and helpful way. It also reveals the truth about personal issues that each partner is aware of. People can benefit from marriage counseling as a means to overcome or reduce the number of marital crises that result in divorce. To reduce and eliminate anxiety, marriage counseling can be carried out using group dynamics and desensitization therapy (Firosad et al., 2016). Using group dynamics, counseling is carried out by more than one prospective bride and groom. In the sense of group, it means that it is carried out in a group where the prospective bride and groom can discuss the implementation of the counseling and use desensitization therapy to reduce or even eliminate anxiety. Because desensitization therapy is quite relevant for treating anxiety problems (Grahatama et al., 2022).

In the behavioral counseling approach, there are techniques that can reduce anxiety, namely, desensitization techniques (Zola et al., 2021). The desensitization technique is a technique for reducing frightening, worrying, or unpleasant emotional responses through activities that conflict with the frightening response, such as anxiety, panic, trauma, and phobias. And desensitization techniques can help individuals weaken or reduce their negative behavior without eliminating it (Fitriani et al., 2023).

Based on the points of view mentioned above, it can be concluded that systematic desensitization techniques are a method to help individuals reduce unpleasant emotional responses by releasing tension and allowing them to relax and exercise self-control (Vibriyanti, 2020). In this case, it is hoped that the client will be able to control himself by remaining calm and having a relaxed body. During the counseling process, the

counselor will continue to monitor the client's health. It is believed that the counselor will really want to overcome the tension he is facing. In previous research, desensitization techniques were used in the research "Systematic Desensitization Techniques to Reduce Student Phobias," stating that desensitization techniques could be an alternative for overcoming phobias. And there is another research, namely "Use of Systematic Desensitization Techniques to Reduce Anxiety of Prospective Students in Facing SBMPTN," which states that this technique is able to reduce the anxiety experienced by prospective students (Firosad et al., 2016).

Based on the explanation above, the researcher will conduct research with the title "Effectiveness of Marriage Counseling with Group Dynamics and Systematic Desensitization Techniques to Reduce Anxiety of Prospective Brides at KUA Medan City." The research findings of (Lu et al., 2020) revealed that 53.8 percent of respondents had moderate to severe mental health problems. 16.5 percent of respondents reported experiencing symptoms of depression, and 28.8 percent reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety; furthermore, 8.1% reported stress side effects. Additionally, it was found that women are more susceptible to mental health problems than men. One-third of 7,200 respondents reported experiencing anxiety due to COVID-19, according to (Huang & Zhao, 2020). (Hetkamp et al., 2020) found that individuals experienced increased tension during the pandemic. Even though research by (Megatsari et al., 2020) revealed that respondents aged between 20 and 29 years were 4.33 times more likely to experience anxiety disorders compared to those in the 50-year age group.

According to Rofiq et al (2021), one strategy for dealing with anxiety is to seek counseling. According to Roychowdhury (2019), counseling is an interaction process that results in establishing or clarifying goals and values to determine behavior that will be carried out in the future. It also facilitates understanding of oneself and the environment. This indicates that someone with an anxiety disorder can gain a better understanding of the situation they are facing and determine the next steps they should take to overcome it by receiving counseling (Falobi et al., 2023). According to Tajiri (2014), Islamic principles practiced by the majority of Indonesian society can be a basis for counseling. The two couples in this study, two men and two women, were selected based on their behavior and anxiety symptoms observed during the previous three months (August, September, and October). These principles have existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Premarital anxiety is a condition that occurs in someone who is very worried about something they are thinking about and can disrupt the psychology of the individual who is trying to get married. Some of these problems show that there are some prospective brides and grooms who have anxiety. Anxiety such as thinking about future things that will happen in marriage, inability to take care of children, financial condition, relationship with partner's family, meeting family needs, poor communication, worry about not being able to provide for the family, worry about not being able to allocate time between family and work and so on (Izzaty et al., 2023).

It is important to re-examine these various forms of anxiety using a counseling perspective. One of the efforts in various counseling techniques is the systematic desensitization technique. Systematic desensitization technique is a treatment for treating anxiety. This technique has been widely used and its effects in everyday life have also been researched. This can be seen in a study by Indriana Rachmawati who

explained that systematic desensitization techniques can reduce anxiety by up to 26% in research objects. The researcher took the research location in Medan, because based on the results of initial observations carried out, it showed that from those recorded, 10 couples, meaning 20 prospective brides and grooms, experienced pre-wedding anxiety at KUA Medan. Apart from that, marriage counseling based on desensitization and group dynamics helps clients solve anxiety problems for prospective brides and grooms. This research aims to analyze how well group dynamics and systematic desensitization techniques used in marriage counseling deal with anxiety about getting married or getting ready to get married.

METHOD

This research uses a single-subject research method with an ABA design and visual graphic analysis. There are four subjects who will be studied: two prospective grooms and two prospective brides. This research uses Systematic Desensitization Technique data analysis with the first method, releasing oneself from tension, the second, relaxing, and the third, practicing self-control (Nirwana and Syahniar, 2016), which will be measured through the single subject research formula. A single-subject design was used in this study to compare anxiety levels before and after marriage counseling using group dynamics and systematic desensitization techniques (Burhan, 2001).

The single-subject research design used in this research is ABA. In this design, there are two baselines: a baseline phase. The first (A1) is carried out before the intervention is given, and then the second baseline phase is carried out after the intervention is given. The two couples in this study, two men and two women, were selected based on their behavior and anxiety symptoms observed during the previous three months (August, September, and October). Rofiq (2012) it also facilitates understanding of oneself and the environment. This indicates that someone with an anxiety disorder can gain a better understanding of the situation they are facing and determine the next steps they should take to overcome it by receiving counseling. According to Tajiri, (2014), Islamic principles practiced by the majority of Indonesian society can be a basis for counseling. These principles have existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Apart from that, marriage counseling based on desensitization and group dynamics helps clients solve anxiety problems for prospective brides and grooms. This research aims to analyze how well group dynamics and systematic desensitization techniques used in marriage counseling deal with anxiety about getting married or getting ready to get married. Based on this, the subjects of this research were two pairs of women and men who experienced problems of unease due to marriage arrangements in Medan City. The following stages are used in the group dynamics and systematic desensitization phases of marriage counseling: 1) Identify things that make the client feel anxious. The counselor works with the client to gradually adjust from the most anxious to the least anxious state. 2) Protection for the client's relaxation, such as regular breathing or imagining himself in a location that will help him relax. The goal is for clients to feel calm, comfortable, and at ease. When the client is able to maintain self-control and relax, the systematic desensitization stage can continue. This research uses a self-tension scale to determine anxiety stressors in clients including: 1)when you hear neighbors gossiping about marriage, 2) when you see the increasing

divorce news on Social Media, 3) when there are problems experienced during dating. This scale uses a Likert scale, with numbers 1 to 3 used to describe the suitability of the symptoms experienced on this scale. Number one is in the low category if it rarely or never occurs; number two is in the medium category if it occurs frequently; and number three is in the high category if it often or always occurs. Data analysis uses visual inspection and, coupled with descriptive analysis, presentation of data and graphs to display the scores obtained, which will show the decrease in scores from baseline phase 1 to baseline phase 2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The counselor must be made aware that the activities to be carried out are a form of effort to reduce their anxiety before starting the counseling process. However, the counselee must also be made aware that the results obtained cannot be forced according to the counselee's wishes, but whatever the results are, they are part of the Almighty's decision (Welter, 2016). The counselor and counselee then come to the conclusion that Allah SWT is the source of every situation that every person encounters and that no human ability or will will have an effect if Allah SWT does not will it (Suriadi, 2019). The conditions of this pandemic have been outlined by God Almighty so that complaints and fears about the situation only become a burden, so you must accept it sincerely. That's also what's happening now. Basically, the basic techniques for marriage counseling, according to Zahra et al (2021) include the following: First, active listening, The counselor can listen and try to understand what the counselee means or says. This ability must be possessed by counselors so that clients feel cared for and listened to and can express their feelings comfortably. Second, focusing and following: in this case, the counselor focuses attention on the counselee and follows what the counselee says. The components that must be present in this technique are eye contact, the counselor's verbal expressions to the client, and non-verbal behavior. Third, probing: in this technique, the counselor responds to something that has been expressed by the counselee and tries to dig deeper into the problem presented by the counselee. However, exploring the problem must be done gently and firmly, without forcing the counselee to feel comfortable. Fourth, encouraging: in this case, the counselor must be able to support and encourage the counselee to be able to face all problems with a wise and mature attitude. That way, the client feels that they are not alone and have friends to face their problems with. Fifth, clarification: this action aims to let the client know that. The counselor understands what is being said. In this case, it can be in the form of words or explanations. Sixth, confronting, meaning that there are gaps or contradictions within the counselee that must be pointed out by the counselor. The purpose of this technique is to find out that there has been a contradiction within the client regarding what has been said and the behavior or reality. However, with this technique, the counselor must be extra careful in using it so that the client does not feel disturbed during the counseling process. Seventh, teaching, namely the counselor's skills in being able to direct the conversation from one topic to another. Usually, this technique is used in the form of questions. In this case, it is intended that the counselee will be helped to solve the problem and help make a decision regarding the problem. Eighth, reflecting: in this case, the counselor tries to re-express what the counselee said in order to obtain the truth about what the counselor understands regarding the counselee's problem. Ninth, self-disclosure, which

means self-disclosure. In this case, the counselor can be open in conveying his personal experiences regarding problems that are the same or almost the same as the counselee's problems. This technique can help increase the client's confidence in facing the problem.

The counseling techniques carried out by KUA Medan City, based on research are as follows: 1) At KUA Medan City, the relaxation therapy process combined with systematic desensitization techniques to relieve the bride and groom's anxiety is carried out methodically and structuredly. Helping with problems, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, evaluation, and follow-up are the stages of counseling. Counselors use systematic desensitization techniques in therapy while providing assistance. Identification of anxiety triggers in the client is the first step in this therapy, followed by a systematic desensitization phase, a visualization phase in which anxious scenes are presented, and a follow-up phase. 2) At KUA Medan City, the relaxation therapy process combined with systematic desensitization techniques to relieve the anxiety of the prospective bride and groom can be said to be successful. The client sees changes in himself. At the anxiety trigger identification stage, the results of the client's changes are included in the list of anxiety triggers. These results support this. Where the instructor thinks about the score in the rundown when the counselee has not carried out treatment with the counselee after carrying out treatment Apart from that, the follow-up results obtained by researchers from a number of sources interviewed showed that the counselees had made significant changes and were gradually overcoming their anxiety.

This single-subject research study has limitations in terms of research subjects, and the design of this method is limited to a maximum of five subjects. And in this study, there were 2 male subjects and 2 female subjects, or, you could say, 2 prospective brides and grooms who had been determined to become Because this research uses a single-subject research method, it requires researchers to describe each result or present the data individually or per subject. So the following is a presentation of data from each subject in each condition.

Table 1. Data 1 Anxiety Score For The Bride and Groom

Component	Bride and Groom Anxiety Score (Baseline 1)											
	AOD (L)			KSA (P)			AZK (L)			INA (F)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
When you hear neighbors gossiping about marriage	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
When you see news of increasing divorce on social media	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
When there are problems that have been experienced during dating	2	2	2	3	3	3				3	3	3
Total	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	9	9	9
		24			24			21			27	

If you look at the anxiety score data obtained from baseline Table 1, it can be said that the subject's score is still in the high category and requires intervention. To make it easier to see the stability of the data, researchers will visualize it in graphical form so that it will make things easier for readers.

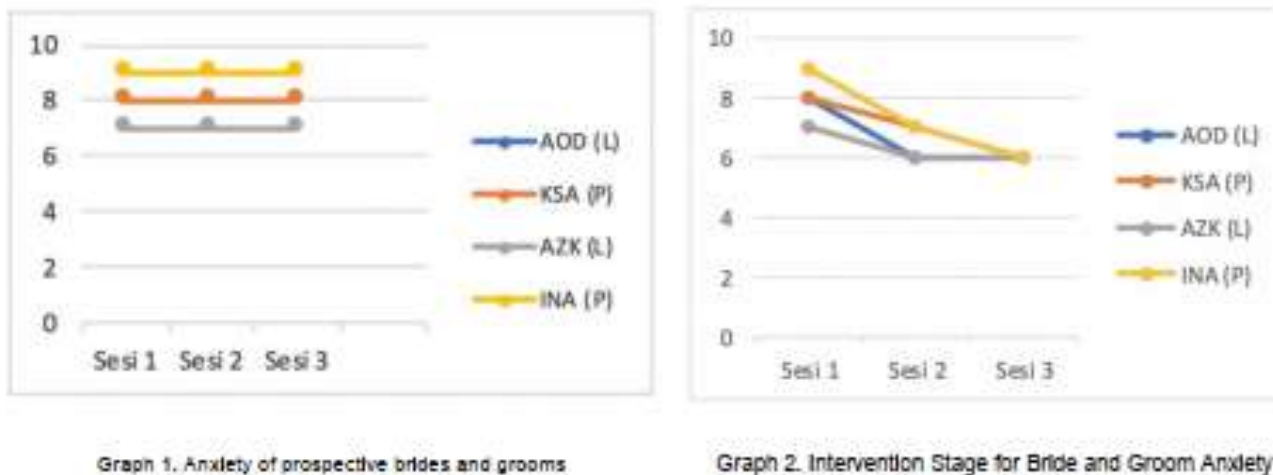


Figure 1. Graph of Data

From graph 1, it shows that the data obtained is stable and suitable to be used as a research sample because anxiety among prospective brides and grooms does exist, is classified as still high in the baseline 1 period, and is of course triggered by several factors that have been mentioned in the research results above. Therefore, it is expected that during the intervention session, there will be a decrease in scores for each session in the intervention phase (Tabel 2). If you look at the anxiety score data in Table 2 obtained from the intervention phase, So it can be said that the subject's score is included in the moderate category, so from here it can be seen that the effect given by the intervention has an influence on the subject's mindset. The anxiety slowly decreased and improved. To make it easier to see the stability of the data, researchers will visualize it in graphical form so that it will make things easier for readers (Graph 2).

Based on graph 2, it shows that there is a decrease in levels from high to low. Although the decrease is not stable, the graph line is decreasing, which means that the anxiety of the prospective bride and groom is improving or decreasing. However, we have to see in the baseline phase 2 whether the score obtained decreases or increases because in the baseline phase 2, the implementation of the intervention will be lifted, and in this phase, we will see how effective the counseling and intervention process provided by the counselor to the counselee is to see the score at baseline 2.

Table 2. Intervention Stages for Prospective Bride and Groom Anxiety

Component	Bride and Groom Anxiety Score (Baseline 1)											
	AOD (L)			KSA (P)			AZK (L)			INA (F)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
When you hear neighbors gossiping about marriage	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
When you see news of increasing divorce on social media	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
When there are problems that have been experienced during dating	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
Total	8	6	6	8	7	6	7	6	6	9	7	6
		20			21			19			22	

Table 3. Prospective Bride and Groom Anxiety Score (Baseline 2)

Component	Bride and Groom Anxiety Score (Baseline 1)											
	AOD (L)			KSA (P)			AZK (L)			INA (F)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
When you hear neighbors gossiping about marriage	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1
When you see news of increasing divorce on social media	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
When there are problems that have been experienced during dating	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Total	5	3	3	5	4	3	5	3	3	6	4	3
		11			12			11			13	

If you look at the anxiety score data obtained from the intervention phase. So it can be said that the subject's score is included in the low category so that from here it can be seen that the anxiety is slowly decreasing and improving. To make it easier to see the stability of the data, researchers will visualize it in graphical form so that it will make it easier for readers.

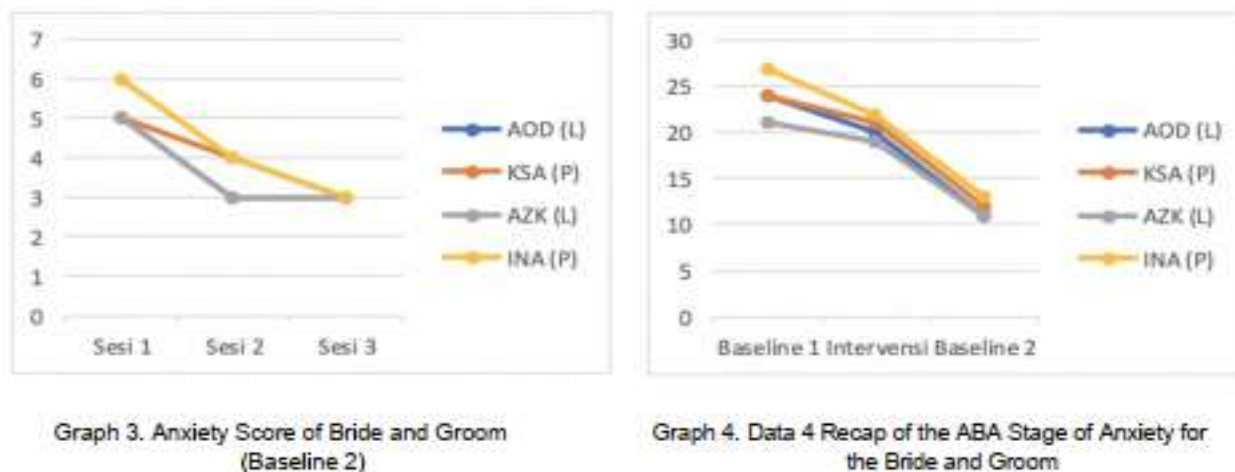


Figure 2. Graph of Data

Based on graph 2, it can be seen that there is a significant decrease from baseline phase 1, intervention, and baseline phase 2, where initially the counselee's score was in the high category to a score in the low category. To see the progress of decreasing scores, the following is a recap of the scores obtained in the ABA stage (Table 4). To see the progress of the decline, it is easier to use a graph so that the pattern of decreasing anxiety in prospective brides and grooms will be seen very clearly, Graph 4.

Table 4. Recap data of the ABA stage of prospective bride and groom's anxiety

Component	Bride and Groom Anxiety Score (Baseline 1)			
	AOD (L)	KSA (P)	AZK (L)	INA (F)
Baseline 1	24	24	21	27
Intervention	20	21	19	22
Baseline 2	11	12	11	13
Total	55	57	51	62

Based on Table 3 in the baseline 2 session, it is known that anxiety triggers from baseline 1 to baseline 2 in AOD subjects decreased by 13 points, KSA subjects decreased by 12 points, AZK subjects decreased by 10 points, and INA subjects decreased by 14 points. Based on observations of the client's behavior, who initially withdrew from the environment and chose not to work before starting to work again, this indicates an anxiety disorder that improved after therapy. Counselees also begin to communicate in a general atmosphere, even though they are more often silent because they feel below standard. The client also stated during the last interview that although there was still fear and anxiety, he felt more comfortable and calm than before. The physical symptoms of the client's anxiety disorder also gradually improved. The most sensitive parts of a person's psychology are touched upon in marriage counseling, which can be a treatment for anxiety (Isgandarova, 2012; Mujiburrahman, 2013; Suriadi, 2019). Marriage counseling uses stories and conclusions based on Islamic values contained in the Qur'an and Hadith to reduce stress sensitivity (desensitization) (Mustofa, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The results of the marriage counseling process using group dynamics with effective desensitization techniques to overcome anxiety due to wedding preparations show that this technique is successful in reducing the client's anxiety. This can be seen from the decrease in the anxiety score felt by the counselee from each anxiety trigger. The physical and psychological symptoms experienced by the counselee due to anxiety disorders are also reduced. Apart from that, the behavior shown by the counselor also develops after therapy. Based on observations of the client's initially interesting behavior themselves from the environment and choose not to work before starting to work again, this indicates an anxiety disorder that improves after therapy. The counselee also begins to communicate with the general atmosphere although they are more often silent because they feel below standard. Counselor also stated during the last interview that although there is still fear and anxiety, he feels more comfortable and quiet than before. The physical symptoms of the client's anxiety disorder also gradually develop improved. However, further research needs to be done regarding the existence of a little resistance among clients whose Islamic traditions are not as strong as those of other clients. This research was only limited to 4 people so it cannot be generalized. Future researchers are expected to readjust according to the research sample criteria and the situation in the field.

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