

Enhancing students' interpersonal communication through a Kato Nan Ampek-based group counseling cognitive-behavioral model

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Abstract

In recent years, high school students have faced increasing challenges in establishing effective interpersonal communication, a critical skill for academic success and personal development. This study developed a cognitive-behavioral group counseling guide that integrates Kato Nan Ampek values to enhance students' interpersonal communication skills. The research followed a Research and Development (R&D) approach, including preliminary studies, product design, expert validation, and limited trials. Validation by experts in counseling, cultural studies, and educational media, as well as input from potential users, affirmed the guide's theoretical feasibility. The guide was further evaluated through its application in a school setting, where it demonstrated substantial effectiveness in improving students' interpersonal communication. The results highlight the guide's practical value for school counselors, emphasizing the significance of integrating local cultural values into counseling practices. This study underscores the potential of culturally grounded interventions in enhancing communication skills and offers insights for future research that could explore its broader applicability across diverse educational contexts.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication Skills, Cognitive-Behavioral Group Counseling, Kato Nan Ampek Values, Guide Development and Testing, Culturally-Based Counseling

Abstrak

Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, siswa SMA menghadapi tantangan yang semakin besar dalam membangun komunikasi interpersonal yang efektif, sebuah keterampilan yang krusial untuk kesuksesan akademik dan perkembangan pribadi. Penelitian ini mengembangkan panduan konseling kelompok berbasis kognitif-perilaku yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Kato Nan Ampek untuk meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi interpersonal siswa. Penelitian ini mengikuti pendekatan Penelitian dan Pengembangan (R&D), yang mencakup studi pendahuluan, desain produk, validasi ahli, dan uji coba terbatas. Validasi oleh ahli konseling, studi budaya, dan media pendidikan, serta masukan dari pengguna potensial, mengonfirmasi kelayakan teoretis panduan ini. Panduan ini selanjutnya dievaluasi melalui penerapannya di sekolah, di mana menunjukkan efektivitas yang signifikan dalam meningkatkan komunikasi interpersonal siswa. Hasil penelitian ini menyoroti nilai praktis panduan ini bagi konselor sekolah, serta pentingnya mengintegrasikan nilai budaya lokal dalam praktik konseling. Penelitian ini juga menggarisbawahi potensi intervensi yang berbasis budaya dalam meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi dan memberikan wawasan untuk penelitian selanjutnya yang dapat mengeksplorasi penerapannya yang lebih luas di berbagai konteks pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan Komunikasi Interpersonal, Konseling Kelompok Kognitif-Perilaku, Nilai Kato Nan Ampek, Pengembangan dan Pengujian Panduan, Konseling Berbasis Budaya Lokal



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INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in social life, especially for high school students who are in the stage of adolescent development (Anggraini et al., 2022; Maizura et al., 2024; Rafida & Astuti, 2024). The ability to communicate effectively not only contributes to building healthy social relationships but also affects students' emotional and academic development (Olufemi & Opeoluwa, 2020; Rautakoski et al., 2021; Suryana & Permana, 2025). As part of the social learning process, interpersonal communication enables students to develop empathy, teamwork skills, and effective problem-solving abilities (Erol, 2025; Narikbayeva et al., 2025; Özcan & Sakız, 2025; Sayahi et al., 2025). Therefore, it is essential for educators, particularly counselors, to provide guidance that can enhance students' interpersonal communication skills (Fahdi et al., 2025).

However, in practice, many high school students continue to face difficulties in communicating with peers, teachers, and even parents (Anderson et al., 2025; Er et al., 2023; J. Kim & Cho, 2025; Mariotto et al., 2024). Factors such as low emotional intelligence, lack of active listening skills, and the influence of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds can hinder effective communication (Subasinghe, 2024; Wilson et al., 2024). In this context, cognitive-based counseling plays a vital role in helping students understand and modify thought patterns that may obstruct their interpersonal communication (Iheduru-Anderson, 2025). Cognitive counseling can

increase students' awareness of their communication patterns and encourage more positive behavioral changes (Ellison et al., 2024; M. H. Kim et al., 2025). Furthermore, cultural values embedded in local philosophies can serve as an effective medium to improve the quality of interpersonal communication (Sun et al., 2024). One relevant cultural value is Kato Nan Ampek (*kato mandata*, *kato mandaki*, *kato malereang*, and *kato manurun*), which originates from Minangkabau culture (Maizura et al., 2025). This value encompasses four core principles *raso*, *pareso*, *sopan*, and *malu* which function as moral guidelines within community life (Fithri et al., 2023). These values emphasize harmony, mutual respect, and appreciation of differences, which greatly support the development of interpersonal communication skills in a pluralistic social context (Ljubicic et al., 2021).

Integrating Kato Nan Ampek values into cognitive counseling can add a new dimension to improving high school students' interpersonal communication skills (Yeni & Netri, 2021; Yusputa, 2021). Through the internalization of these values, students can learn to communicate more openly, attentively, and sensitively to the needs and feelings of others (Parsaiyan & Karimi, 2023). This approach is expected to enhance the quality of social relationships within schools and foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all individuals (Chinhara & Kuyayama, 2024; Meyer et al., 2025). Previous studies have shown that counseling approaches that incorporate local cultural values can strengthen social bonds and increase the overall effectiveness of counseling services

(Kuo et al., 2023; Mogos et al., 2024; Shek et al., 2024). However, despite the existence of several culturally-based counseling approaches, efforts to develop a counseling guide grounded in Kato Nan Ampek values remain very limited (Putu et al., 2023). Currently, there is no validated and tested counseling guide that integrates Kato Nan Ampek using a robust R&D framework. Therefore, this study aims to develop a cognitive counseling guide that incorporates Kato Nan Ampek values and can be implemented in educational contexts to enhance high school students' interpersonal communication skills (Fitri et al., 2025).

In addition, the cognitive approach in counseling can help students become more aware of thought patterns that may influence how they communicate with others (Leyland & Choucri, 2024). Counselors can facilitate students to explore and evaluate these obstructive thought patterns and assist them in developing skills to replace them with more constructive ones (Chong et al., 2024). Through this approach, students are expected not only to communicate more effectively but also to manage conflicts and understand others' perspectives (Chan & Tsi, 2024). This study is expected to produce a counseling model that can be adapted in various schools while considering local cultural richness, serving as a reference for the development of counseling practices in West Sumatra, particularly in improving students' interpersonal communication. Thus, the development of a cognitive counseling guide based on Kato Nan Ampek values is not only beneficial for students but also contributes to enhancing the quality of character education in Indonesia.

This study offers not only practical contributions to efforts aimed at improving high school students' interpersonal

communication but also provides significant theoretical implications. By integrating Kato Nan Ampek values into cognitive counseling, this research bridges the gap between local cultural wisdom and modern counseling techniques. It expands the understanding of how culturally rooted values can be effectively integrated into a cognitive-behavioral framework to enhance communication skills within multicultural educational settings. Theoretically, this research proposes a new model for integrating culture-based values into counseling practice, enriching existing theories related to cognitive counseling and cultural competence. This approach underscores the importance of cultural relevance in psychological interventions and offers valuable perspectives for future research and practice in the field of guidance and counseling.

METHODS

Type of Research

The research model employed in this study is Research and Development (R&D). This model is adapted from the ADDIE framework, which is widely recognized as a procedural model (Branch, 2010). R&D is a process used to develop and validate products intended for use in educational and instructional contexts (Richter & Richter, 2024). In this study, the R&D approach was applied to produce a group counseling guide utilizing cognitive restructuring techniques to enhance the interpersonal communication skills of 11th-grade students at SMA Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP.

Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of 176 students. The sampling method used was purposive sampling. A total of 16 students were selected as the sample based on the following criteria: (1) students

enrolled in grade XI at SMA Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP; (2) students of Minangkabau descent; and (3) students whose underlying beliefs require improvement.

Research Procedure

The research procedure consisted of four stages: identifying potential and problems (analysis), design, development, implementation, and evaluation, in accordance with the theoretical framework of the ADDIE model (Sugiyono, 2013). The design of the ADDIE model is illustrated in Figure 1.

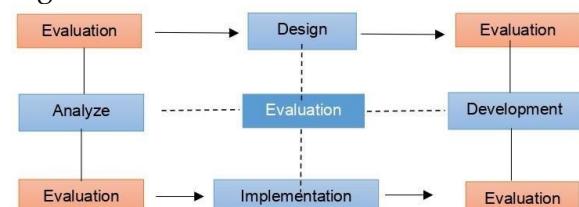


Figure 1. ADDIE model research design (Branch, 2010)

The instruments used in this study consisted of questionnaires. These instruments were designed to conduct a needs analysis for students as well as to facilitate evaluations by experts. The first instrument was a questionnaire administered to students to measure their level of communication within the school context. This questionnaire helped the researchers identify students with low, moderate, and high levels of communication anxiety. The second instrument was intended for experts and potential users to evaluate the product. This instrument was in the form of an assessment sheet that included a rating scale along with sections for comments and suggestions.

The rating scale was used to assess the product's specifications in terms of accuracy, usefulness, feasibility, appropriateness, and attractiveness. Meanwhile, the comments and suggestions section provided comprehensive feedback

regarding the overall quality of the developed product. The interpersonal communication scale used in this study was developed based on (Devito, 2013) theory and consisted of 50 statement items. After a thorough validation process, 10 items were found to be invalid and subsequently removed from the final version of the scale. The remaining 40 valid items were used for data collection. The reliability test of this scale showed a high Cronbach's alpha value of 0.935, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the instrument.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis techniques used in this study consisted of both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitative analysis was employed to examine and interpret the rating scale data related to the counseling guide product. The rating scale ranged from 1 to 4, representing the categories "highly appropriate," "appropriate," "less appropriate," and "inappropriate." These scores were then calculated and presented in percentage form to determine the product's feasibility category. Conversely, qualitative analysis was used to obtain more in-depth input, including critiques and recommendations that highlighted specific issues, contexts, complexities, and other subjective aspects. The qualitative data collected from the written feedback served as a basis for revising and refining the counseling guide to ensure the overall quality of the product. A non-parametric test, the Wilcoxon test, was used, followed by an effectiveness test using the Mann-Whitney test. These analyses were conducted to compare the effectiveness of the counseling guide between the experimental and control groups, thereby determining whether the intervention had a statistically significant effect on improving students' interpersonal communication skills.

RESULTS

The results of the various stages of development based on the ADDIE model which include Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation are described in the following sections. The results of administering the interpersonal communication scale to students at SMA Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Results of the Preliminary Study

Categori	Interval	N	%
High	≥ 153	4	2,3
Medium	97 – 152	66	37,5
Low	41 - 96	106	60,2
Total		176	100

Based on the table above, the majority of students demonstrated low levels of interpersonal communication. A total of 106 students (60.2%) fell into the low category with scores ranging from 41 to 96. Furthermore, 66 students (37.5%) were categorized as moderate, with scores ranging from 97 to 152. Lastly, only four students (2.3%) were classified as high, with scores ≥ 153 . These findings are consistent with previous research, which shows that low levels of interpersonal communication among adolescents are often related to limited opportunities to practice social skills in supportive environments (Mulyani et al., 2021).

The researcher developed a conceptual framework for a group counseling guidebook based on cognitive behavioral counseling infused with the "Kato nan Ampek" values to enhance students' interpersonal communication. The results at the design stage are as follows: The initial cover design for the front and back of the group counseling guidebook employing cognitive behavioral

techniques integrated with "Kato nan Ampek" values features a turquoise color with an image of a *rumah gadang* (traditional Minangkabau house) symbolizing the cultural values adopted from Minangkabau heritage. It also includes an illustration of a group counseling session between the school counselor and high school students. The title and the Universitas Negeri Malang logo, as the institution overseeing the development of this guidebook, are displayed at the top, while the author's and institutional identity are provided at the bottom.

The guidebook components include a detailed explanation of the rationale and urgency for selecting cognitive behavioral group counseling services. Specifically, Section I (Introduction) consists of the product illustration, rationale, objectives, benefits, and target audience. Section II outlines the theoretical concepts, including interpersonal communication, cognitive-behavioral approaches, cognitive restructuring techniques, group counseling, and "Kato nan Ampek" values. Section III describes the implementation procedures, covering the steps for conducting the service, stages of group counseling sessions, integration of "Kato nan Ampek" values into interpersonal communication, and the session design. Section IV details the service implementation plan, comprising Session I (Pre-test), Session II–V session plans, and Session VI (Post-test). Finally, Section V provides the evaluation guidelines, which include both process and outcome evaluations.

The developed guidebook underwent a validation process to determine its acceptability for use by school counselors. The validation involved experts in the areas of content, media, culture, and prospective users. The results

were presented in the form of quantitative data. The evaluation by the content expert resulted in a score of 1, indicating a very high level of validity and categorizing the guidebook as highly feasible. Similarly, the media expert's assessment yielded a score of 1, also indicating very high validity and feasibility. The cultural expert's evaluation produced the same result, with a score of 1 and classification as highly feasible. Finally, the prospective users' assessment also resulted in a score of 1, reflecting very high validity and feasibility.

The developed guidebook was subsequently implemented with students at SMA Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP. The study employed purposive sampling to form two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The sampling criteria were as follows: (1) students enrolled at SMA Pembangunan Laboratorium UNP, (2) students of Minangkabau ethnicity, and (3) students whose core beliefs related to communication urgently required improvement. These criteria resulted in a final sample of 16 students. After providing the cognitive behavioral group counseling service using cognitive restructuring techniques with "Kato nan Ampek" values to the experimental group, pre-test and post-test results were analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. The following is the data on the results of the pretest and post test in the experimental group.

Table 2. Data on Pretest and Post Test Results for Experimental Group

Pretest	Percentage	Categori	Posttest	Percentage	Categori
78	39%	Low	157	79%	High
84	42%	Low	136	68%	Medium
91	46%	Low	148	74%	High
76	38%	Low	150	75%	High
75	38%	Low	134	67%	Medium
93	47%	Low	159	80%	High
91	46%	Low	139	70%	Medium
90	45%	Low	152	76%	Medium

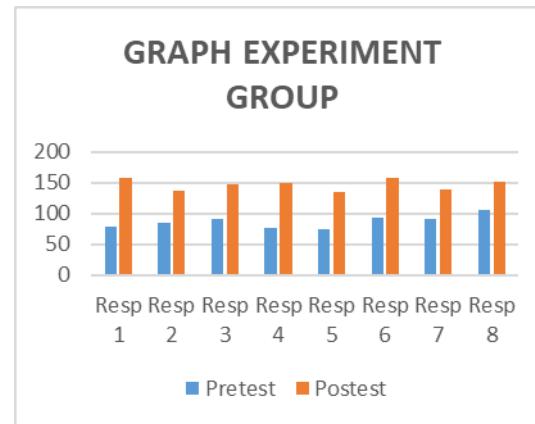


Figure 2. Graph Experimental Group

After knowing the pretest and posttest values in the experimental group, it will then be analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. The following is the data from the Wilcoxon test results in the experimental group contained in Table 2

Table 3. Wilcoxon Test Ranks Values in the Experimental Group

		Ranks		Mean	Sum of Ranks
		N	Rank		
POSTTES	Negative Ranks	0 ^a		.00	.00
T -					
PRETEST	Positive Ranks	8 ^b		4.50	36.00
	Ties	0 ^c			
	Total	8			

Based on the Table 3 , it shows that there is an increase between the pretest posttest scores of 8 respondents. This can be seen through the positive ranks value in Table 3.

Table 4. Test Statistic Values in the Experimental Group

Test Statistics ^a	
POSTTEST - PRETEST	
Z	-2.521 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.012

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the significance value is 0.012, which means that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest values in the experimental group. So it can be concluded that cognitive behavioral group counseling with the value of kato nan ampek is effective for improving interpersonal communication. The following is the data on the results of the pretest and post test in the control group.

Table 5. Data on Pretest and Post Test Results for Control Group

Pretest	Percentage	Categori	Posttest	Percentage	Categori
87	44%	Low	133	67%	Medium
89	45%	Low	136	68%	Medium
81	41%	Low	112	56%	Medium
76	38%	Low	124	62%	Medium
75	38%	Low	135	68%	Medium
90	45%	Low	155	78%	High
88	44%	Low	139	70%	Medium
71	36%	Low	110	55%	Medium

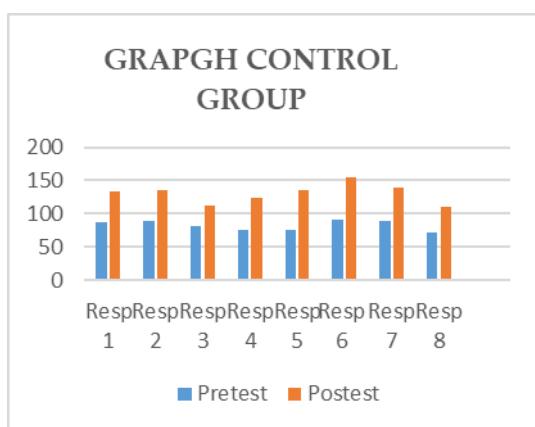


Figure 3. Graph Control Group

After knowing the pretest and posttest values in the control group, it will then be analyzed using the Wilcoxon test. The

following is the data from the Wilcoxon test results in the control group contained in Table 6.

Table 6. Wilcoxon Test Ranks Values in the Control Group

		Ranks	
		N	Mean Rank
POSTTE	Negative Ranks	0 ^a	.00
ST - PRETEST	Positive Ranks	8 ^b	4.50
	Ties	0 ^c	
	Total	8	

Based on the table above, it shows that there is an increase between the pretest posttest scores of 8 respondents. This can be seen through the positive ranks value in table 6.

Table 7. Test Statistic Values in the Control Group

Test Statistics ^a	
POSTTEST - PRETEST	
Z	-2.521 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.012

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the significance value is 0.012, which means that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores in the control group. So it can be concluded that cognitive behavioral group counseling using shaping techniques is effective for improving students' interpersonal communication. Furthermore, the data above will be analyzed using the Mann Whitney test. It aims to determine the difference between the results of the experimental group using a cognitive behavioral approach with restructuring techniques charged with the value of kato

nan ampek and the control group using a cognitive behavioral approach with shaping techniques. The following below are the results of the mann whitney test contained in Table 8.

Table 8. Analysis Mann Whitney Test

Test Statistics ^a	
	Post test
Mann-Whitney U	11.000
Wilcoxon W	47.000
Z	-2.210
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.027
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.028 ^b

Based on the table above, it is known that the value of Asymp. Sig. (So it can be concluded that the significance value of 0.027 <0.05, which means that there is a difference between cognitive-behavioral group counseling using cognitive restructuring techniques charged with the value of kato nan ampek with cognitive-behavioral group counseling using shaping techniques. thus, it is tested that cognitive-behavioral group counseling with cultural values of kato nan ampek is more effective than cognitive group counseling with shaping techniques without cultural elements.

DISCUSSION

These findings are consistent with previous research that emphasizes the role of culturally-based counseling interventions in enhancing students' communication abilities and social skills. Integrating local wisdom into counseling approaches can strengthen students' sense of belonging and cultural identity, which ultimately facilitates more open and meaningful interpersonal interactions (Sakti et al., 2024). Similarly, (Grotevant et al., 2011) showed that combining cognitive-behavioral techniques with cultural values

helps bridge the gap between traditional counseling frameworks and students' everyday social realities. These results support the conclusion that a culturally responsive cognitive-behavioral group counseling model such as one that integrates *Kato Nan Ampek* values can serve as an effective strategy for fostering students' interpersonal communication skills in a contextually relevant and meaningful way.

In addition, these findings are consistent with various previous studies that have demonstrated the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral group counseling interventions, including the use of shaping techniques, in improving students' interpersonal communication skills. For example, research by Ryum & Nikolaos Kazantzis (2024) found that applying shaping strategies within a cognitive counseling framework gradually helps students build positive communication behaviors through the step-by-step reinforcement of desired interactions. Likewise, a study conducted by (Banat et al., 2020) emphasized that structured group counseling using behavioral techniques can significantly improve students' self-confidence and social adjustment, ultimately leading to better peer relationships and more effective communication in both academic and social contexts. Therefore, the improvements observed in this study are in line with these findings and support the conclusion that shaping techniques can be applied as a strategy to develop students' interpersonal communication skills within a cognitive-behavioral counseling approach.

However, the effectiveness test comparing cognitive-behavioral group counseling services that used cognitive restructuring techniques incorporating *Kato Nan Ampek* values with those using

shaping techniques showed that the group counseling with cognitive restructuring techniques was more effective in helping students improve their interpersonal communication, whether at school, at home, or in the community.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce earlier literature indicating that interpersonal communication skills are strongly associated with environments that support the practice of communication. However, the results also broaden the understanding of standard Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) by emphasizing that CBT approaches should be adapted to local cultural contexts to ensure greater relevance (Ciftci et al., 2024; Queiroz et al., 2025). By integrating *Kato Nan Ampek* values, this guide is expected to bridge students' hesitation in expressing their thoughts and feelings through communication norms that are familiar and widely accepted in their daily lives. Unlike previous studies that primarily highlight CBT's role in addressing individuals' internal issues (such as negative thoughts or cognitive dysfunctions), this study extends the CBT framework by incorporating elements of local wisdom (Burbank et al., 2024).

Several scholars have argued that the application of CBT should consider cultural contexts to achieve more optimal outcomes, especially in diverse societies. These findings support the view that CBT can be optimized through a combined approach in which local cultural values like *Kato Nan Ampek* act as a bridge between theoretical concepts and local practices. Furthermore, while previous research has emphasized the importance of environmental support, this discussion shows that cultural values also influence how students receive and interpret such support (Irgin & Bilki, 2024; Thao & Thuy, 2025). Thus, this guide not only

demonstrates that CBT remains relevant but also contributes to developing a more culturally sensitive form of CBT, which remains relatively underexplored in the context of school counseling.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and development of the cognitive-behavioral group counseling guidebook incorporating *Kato Nan Ampek* values to improve high school students' interpersonal communication, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) The cognitive-behavioral group counseling guidebook, which integrates *Kato Nan Ampek* values, has been theoretically validated. This validation was supported by expert feedback from guidance and counseling professionals, cultural experts, instructional media specialists, and potential users of the guidebook. (2) The guidebook has demonstrated practical acceptability and effectiveness in enhancing interpersonal communication skills among high school students. The findings suggest that the integration of *Kato Nan Ampek* values in counseling interventions is a meaningful and culturally relevant approach to improving students' communication skills. This research highlights the importance of culturally grounded methods in counseling and suggests that the guidebook can serve as a valuable resource for school counselors. Future studies should further explore the broader applicability of this guidebook across different educational settings to enhance its impact and relevance.

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