

Enhancing Student Discipline Through Behavior Contract-Based Group Guidance Among Vocational High School Students: A Guidance and Counseling Action Research

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Abstract

This study addresses the issue of low student discipline at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh, which is reflected in frequent tardiness, incomplete school uniforms, leaving the classroom without permission, and lack of order during learning activities. Initial measurements using a student discipline psychological scale indicated that discipline levels were in the low category, with the weakest aspects being discipline in submitting assignments and social discipline. This study aimed to identify students' discipline conditions prior to intervention, describe the implementation of group guidance services using behavior contract techniques, and analyze improvements in student discipline after the intervention. The research employed Guidance and Counseling Action Research (PTBK) conducted in two cycles, each consisting of three meetings. The intervention was implemented through group guidance services integrated with behavior contract techniques, emphasizing written agreements on expected disciplined behaviors formulated collaboratively between students and counselors. The study was carried out collaboratively with the school counselor to evaluate both the process and outcomes of the intervention. Research instruments included a discipline psychological scale, observation sheets, interview guidelines, and documentation. The results showed a significant improvement in student discipline. In Cycle I, discipline achievement reached 44% and was categorized as moderate. After improvements were implemented in Cycle II, discipline increased to 74% and was categorized as good. Psychological scale results indicated a 57.5% improvement across measured aspects and a 32.5% increase between pre-test and post-test scores. These findings demonstrate that group guidance using behavior contract techniques is effective in strengthening student discipline.

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INTRODUCTION

Discipline constitutes a fundamental dimension of character education and a key prerequisite for effective learning. It reflects not only students' obedience to school regulations but also punctuality, responsibility, self-control, consistency, and compliance with established norms. In vocational education, discipline is particularly important because students are expected to develop not only academic and technical competencies but also work-related attitudes such as responsibility, punctuality, and adherence to procedures. These competencies are essential for vocational students preparing to enter professional workplaces that require accountability and

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consistent behavior (Arikunto, 2019; Bukoting, 2023). Therefore, strengthening discipline is an important part of preparing students for both academic achievement and future employment.

The importance of discipline is especially evident in vocational education, where learning involves practical activities, workshops, laboratories, internships, and project-based tasks that require students to follow procedures and demonstrate responsibility. Tardiness, incomplete assignments, disregard for instructions, and violations of school regulations may interfere with learning and the development of professional habits. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024) emphasizes that vocational education should develop competencies relevant to employment, including responsibility, problem solving, collaboration, and work-related behavioral competencies. Thus, discipline should be understood not merely as an administrative concern but also as an important component of employability and work readiness.

Recent evidence indicates that student discipline remains a significant challenge internationally. The OECD (2023) reports that nearly one-third of students across OECD countries experience classroom disruptions related to students' failure to listen or excessive noise and disorder. Such conditions can reduce learning opportunities and negatively affect academic engagement. UNESCO (2023) similarly emphasizes supportive and educational disciplinary approaches that foster responsibility, respect, and self-regulation rather than relying primarily on punitive measures. In Indonesia, disciplinary problems among secondary and vocational students include tardiness, absenteeism, neglect of regulations, low responsibility, and weak self-control (Rahmawati & Hasanah, 2021; Rofiq, 2017). These problems may reflect difficulties in self-regulation and intrinsic behavioral control rather than simple disobedience.

Self-regulation is therefore an important mechanism underlying student discipline. Zimmerman (2002) explains that self-regulated learners monitor their behavior, evaluate their performance, and adjust their actions to achieve predetermined goals. This ability is particularly relevant to vocational students, who are required to manage their time, responsibilities, practical activities, and adherence to procedures. Consistent with this perspective, Baeng et al. (2021) found a significant relationship between self-regulation and learning discipline among vocational high school students. Strengthening discipline should therefore provide students with opportunities to establish behavioral targets, monitor progress, evaluate consequences, and develop personal responsibility.

Student discipline is also influenced by the social environment. Positive teacher-student relationships are associated with stronger student engagement and more positive educational outcomes (Roorda et al., 2011). Durlak et al. (2011) found that structured school-based social and emotional learning interventions can improve students' social behavior, attitudes, and academic outcomes. These findings suggest that disciplinary interventions may be more effective when behavioral expectations are combined with reflection, interpersonal support, and opportunities for personal development.

From the guidance and counseling perspective, group guidance is a preventive and developmental service that facilitates self-understanding, social responsibility, and adaptive behavior through group interaction (Prayitno, 2012; Corey, 2017). Through group guidance, students can exchange experiences, reflect on behavioral consequences, receive peer feedback, and develop greater social accountability. Previous studies have demonstrated the

potential of group guidance to improve student discipline. Krisna and Rajeg (2023) reported improvements in student discipline through group guidance, while Latupeirissa et al. (2025) found that group-based counseling provided opportunities for students to discuss behavioral problems, receive support, and strengthen responsibility. However, group guidance may be strengthened by incorporating a structured behavioral technique that translates general expectations into specific and measurable behavioral commitments.

Within behavioral counseling, the behavior contract technique provides such a structure by involving students in explicit behavioral agreements accompanied by reinforcement and clear consequences (Faizin, 2024; Skinner, 1953). The technique enables counselors and students to establish target behaviors, determine expected standards, monitor behavioral achievement, and provide reinforcement. Alwahbi (2020) reported that contingency contracting can be applied to various academic and non-academic behaviors and may support behavioral improvement through structured expectations and reinforcement. Similarly, Cantrell et al. (1972) demonstrated that contingency contracts could increase desired classroom behaviors when expectations and consequences were clearly established.

Several previous studies have also demonstrated the effectiveness of behavior contract techniques in improving student discipline, learning responsibility, and compliance with school regulations (Aini & Wibowo, 2020; Hafid et al., 2022; Munawaroh & Hidayat, 2022). In addition, research has linked self-regulation and social-emotional competencies with responsible behavior, classroom engagement, and positive learning outcomes (Andersson & Granberg, 2022; Cameron et al., 2022; Durlak et al., 2011). These findings provide an empirical basis for interventions that combine behavioral commitment, self-regulation, and social interaction.

Nevertheless, several research gaps remain. First, previous studies have generally examined behavior contracts and group guidance separately, leaving limited evidence on their systematic integration as a unified intervention for improving student discipline. Second, relatively limited attention has been given to vocational high schools, despite the particular importance of discipline for practical learning, workplace preparation, occupational safety, and employability. Third, previous studies have predominantly used experimental, correlational, or descriptive designs, which may provide limited insight into the progressive process of behavioral change. A Guidance and Counseling Action Research approach can address this limitation by enabling counselors to plan, implement, observe, reflect, and refine interventions across successive cycles. Fourth, further research is needed to examine how behavioral contracts and group-based social learning can jointly facilitate behavioral commitment, accountability, and self-regulation.

The present study addresses these gaps by implementing behavior contract-based group guidance through a Guidance and Counseling Action Research design at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. The intervention enables students to identify disciplinary problems, establish behavioral commitments, monitor progress, receive reinforcement, and reflect on behavioral changes within a supportive group environment. The action research framework allows the intervention to be continuously evaluated and refined according to students' responses.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of three elements: behavior contract techniques, group guidance services, and Guidance and Counseling Action Research within a vocational high school context. The behavior contract provides explicit behavioral structure, group guidance facilitates interpersonal learning and reflection, while action research enables

continuous evaluation and improvement. This integrated approach conceptualizes discipline not merely as compliance with school regulations but as a developmental process involving self-regulation, responsibility, behavioral monitoring, and social accountability.

Furthermore, the vocational context strengthens the practical significance of the study because discipline is directly related to students' preparation for the workplace. By developing punctuality, responsibility, consistency, adherence to procedures, and accountability, the intervention may contribute not only to immediate improvements in school discipline but also to students' employability-related behavioral competencies. The study is therefore expected to contribute theoretically to the application of behavioral counseling and practically by providing guidance and counseling teachers with an applicable intervention model for strengthening discipline among vocational high school students.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed Guidance and Counseling Action Research (Penelitian Tindakan Bimbingan dan Konseling/PTBK) using a cyclical action research model consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This design was selected because it enables school counselors and researchers to systematically implement, evaluate, and continuously improve counseling interventions while addressing students' disciplinary problems within an authentic educational setting. PTBK is particularly appropriate for counseling practice because it emphasizes the direct application of intervention, observation of students' responses, and reflective evaluation as an integrated process. Unlike conventional experimental research, which primarily focuses on measuring the effect of an intervention under predetermined conditions, PTBK emphasizes reflective and contextual practice, allowing modifications to be made after each cycle based on the behavioral responses and findings obtained during the intervention.

The research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh, West Kalimantan, Indonesia, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The intervention was implemented in two action cycles, with each cycle consisting of three group guidance meetings. Each cycle followed the same four sequential stages: (1) planning, (2) implementation of the action, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. During the planning stage, the researcher identified students' disciplinary needs, prepared the group guidance activities, developed behavior contract components, and established observation procedures. The action stage involved the implementation of group guidance integrated with behavior contract techniques. During the observation stage, students' behavioral responses and participation throughout the intervention were systematically monitored. Finally, the reflection stage involved evaluating the implementation and identifying aspects that required improvement. Findings and reflections from Cycle I were subsequently used to revise the intervention strategy and improve the implementation of Cycle II, thereby allowing the intervention to become increasingly responsive to students' behavioral needs.

The intervention was implemented through group guidance services integrated with behavior contract techniques. The group guidance sessions provided a structured and supportive environment in which students could identify their disciplinary difficulties, share relevant experiences, reflect on the consequences of their behaviors, and develop strategies for behavioral improvement. Within this process, students were guided to formulate written

behavior contracts containing specific behavioral commitments, reinforcement strategies, and agreed consequences. The behavioral targets were formulated in observable and measurable terms so that students could recognize the expected changes and monitor their own progress. The behavior contracts functioned not only as formal agreements between students and the counselor but also as self-regulation tools designed to strengthen students' responsibility, commitment, behavioral monitoring, and consistency in demonstrating disciplined behavior. The integration of group interaction and behavioral contracting was intended to combine social support and peer learning with clear individual behavioral expectations.

Research Participants

The participants consisted of eight Grade XI students of SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh who demonstrated low levels of discipline based on the results of the initial psychological discipline scale and recommendations from the school counselor. The participants were 15–16 years old, comprising six male students and two female students. The selection of participants was based on the consideration that students demonstrating relatively low levels of discipline required more focused and intensive counseling intervention.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, as this technique allows researchers to intentionally select individuals who possess characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria were: (1) obtaining low scores on the initial discipline scale, (2) being identified by the school counselor as experiencing disciplinary problems, and (3) demonstrating disciplinary behaviors requiring counseling intervention. The identified behaviors included frequent tardiness, leaving the classroom without permission, failing to complete assignments, violating school regulations, using mobile phones during lessons, failing to participate in school activities, disturbing classroom learning, and not wearing complete school uniforms. These criteria ensured that participants were selected based on clearly identified disciplinary needs rather than through random selection.

The relatively small number of participants is consistent with the characteristics of Guidance and Counseling Action Research, which emphasizes intensive intervention, continuous observation, active participation, and in-depth evaluation of behavioral changes. A small group also allows the researcher and counselor to provide more individualized attention, facilitate meaningful interaction among participants, monitor behavioral progress more closely, and identify changes occurring throughout each action cycle. Thus, the number of participants was considered appropriate for the intervention-oriented and reflective nature of the study.

Research Instruments

Four research instruments were employed to collect quantitative and qualitative data, namely: (1) a psychological discipline scale, (2) an observation sheet, (3) a semi-structured interview guide, and (4) documentation. The use of multiple instruments was intended to capture students' disciplinary conditions from complementary perspectives and to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of behavioral changes throughout the intervention.

The psychological discipline scale was used to assess students' initial level of discipline and to identify changes in discipline following the implementation of the intervention. The scale provided quantitative information that could be compared across the research stages and action cycles. The observation sheet was used to systematically record students' behavioral

manifestations, participation, compliance with agreed behavioral targets, and changes observed during group guidance sessions. Observation was particularly important because some behavioral changes might not be fully represented through students' self-reported responses.

The semi-structured interview guide was used to obtain deeper information regarding students' experiences, perceptions, difficulties, and responses to the intervention. The flexible structure of the interview allowed the researcher to explore relevant information that emerged during the counseling process while maintaining consistency with the research objectives. Meanwhile, documentation was used to support the research process by providing relevant records of the implementation, student participation, behavioral contracts, and other materials associated with the intervention.

The combination of these four instruments enabled the researcher to examine students' disciplinary behavior before, during, and after the intervention from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The integration of scale scores, behavioral observations, interview findings, and documentation also supported data triangulation, thereby strengthening the credibility and comprehensiveness of the research findings. This methodological combination was particularly relevant to the action research design because it allowed behavioral changes to be assessed not only through numerical scores but also through observable behavior and students' experiences throughout the intervention cycles.

Tabel 1. Research Instruments

Instrument	Purpose
Psychological Discipline Scale	To measure students' discipline levels before and after the intervention
Observation Sheet	To observe students' participation, behavioral changes, and implementation of group guidance activities
Semi-Structured Interview Guide	To obtain in-depth information regarding students' experiences and the counselor's evaluation
Documentation	To support the research findings through attendance records, photographs, field notes, and counseling documents

Psychological Discipline Scale

The primary instrument used in this study was a psychological discipline scale developed by the researcher based on theoretical indicators of student discipline. The scale consisted of 20 statements measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The instrument was administered twice, namely before the intervention (pretest) and after the completion of Cycle II (posttest), to assess changes in students' discipline levels.

The discipline scale was developed to measure six dimensions of student discipline, namely compliance with school regulations, punctuality in various school activities, responsibility for academic obligations, awareness of values and social norms, personal orderliness and self-discipline, and initiative and active participation in school activities. The development of the instrument involved identifying discipline indicators based on the literature, formulating statements representing each indicator, and organizing the items according to the objectives of the study. The instrument was specifically designed to evaluate changes in students' disciplinary behavior throughout the implementation of behavior contract-based group

guidance. Since this study adopted a Guidance and Counseling Action Research design involving a limited number of participants ($n = 8$), the discipline scale functioned primarily as an evaluative instrument for monitoring behavioral changes rather than as a standardized psychological measurement instrument.

Observation Sheet

Observation was conducted collaboratively with the school counselor, who served as an independent observer throughout the implementation of the group guidance sessions. A structured observation sheet was used to systematically record both the implementation of the counseling activities and the behavioral development of the participants during each meeting. The observation focused on students' participation in group discussions, communication skills, cooperation with other group members, responsibility in completing assigned tasks, commitment to the agreed behavior contract, and the consistency of disciplined behavior demonstrated during the intervention.

In addition to observing students' behavior, the observation sheet was also used to evaluate the implementation of each stage of the group guidance process, including the formation, transition, working, and termination stages. Notes regarding students' responses, interactions, and behavioral changes were recorded after every session to provide qualitative evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention. The observation data served as an important source of information for reflection at the end of each cycle and were used to determine necessary improvements for the subsequent cycle.

Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participating students and the school counselor after the completion of each action cycle. The interviews aimed to obtain in-depth information regarding students' experiences during the implementation of behavior contract-based group guidance, their understanding of discipline, the difficulties encountered while implementing the agreed behavior contracts, and the behavioral changes they perceived throughout the intervention.

The interview with the school counselor focused on evaluating the implementation of the counseling sessions, students' participation and responsiveness, the practicality of the behavior contract technique, and the overall effectiveness of the intervention in improving student discipline. Open-ended questions were used to encourage participants to express their opinions and experiences freely, allowing the researcher to gain richer qualitative information. The interview findings were analyzed descriptively and were used to explain and strengthen the quantitative results obtained from the discipline scale.

Documentation

Documentation was employed as a supporting data collection technique to strengthen the credibility and completeness of the research findings. The documentation included attendance lists, students' written behavior contracts, observation records, field notes, photographs of counseling activities, and other administrative documents related to the implementation of the research.

These documents were used not only to verify the implementation of each stage of the

intervention but also to provide evidence of students' participation and behavioral development throughout the study. Documentation also facilitated the comparison of students' disciplinary behavior before and after the intervention and supported the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Characteristics of Research Participants

The research participants consisted of eight Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh, comprising six male and two female students aged 15–16 years. All participants demonstrated specific disciplinary problems, including frequent tardiness, leaving the classroom without permission, failure to complete assignments, mobile phone use during lessons, lack of participation in school activities, disruption of the learning process, poor classroom cleanliness, and incomplete school uniforms. Their initial discipline scores ranged from 30% to 50%, with a mean of 41%, indicating low discipline levels. Following the intervention, the mean score increased to 77%, with an average improvement of 36 percentage points, and all participants reached the “Good” category. These characteristics indicate that the participants shared common disciplinary difficulties while presenting different behavioral patterns that required targeted counseling intervention.

Tabel 2. Characteristics of Research Participants

Student	Gender	Age	Grade	Main Discipline Problem	Pretest (%)	Posttest (%)	Improvement (%)	Category
DAA	Male	16	XI	Frequently left the classroom without permission	40	82	42	Good
NAP	Female	15	XI	Did not maintain classroom cleanliness	45	78	33	Good
ND	Male	16	XI	Frequently arrived late at school	35	70	35	Good
FF	Male	15	XI	Frequently used a mobile phone during lessons	30	68	38	Good
PA	Male	16	XI	Did not complete school assignments	50	88	38	Good
F	Male	15	XI	Did not participate in the flag ceremony	42	72	30	Good
DR	Male	16	XI	Frequently disturbed the learning process	38	75	37	Good
SF	Female	15	XI	Did not wear the complete school uniform	48	80	32	Good
Mean					41	77	36	Good

Table 4 presents the characteristics of the eight participants involved in this study. The

participants consisted of six male students and two female students aged between 15 and 16 years, all of whom were Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. Before the intervention, each participant demonstrated different forms of disciplinary problems, including tardiness, leaving the classroom without permission, failing to complete academic assignments, using mobile phones during lessons, and violating school regulations. The average pretest discipline score was 41%, indicating a low level of discipline. Following the implementation of group guidance integrated with behavior contract techniques, the average discipline score increased to 77%, representing an average improvement of 36 percentage points. These findings indicate that all participants experienced positive behavioral changes after the intervention.

Initial Condition of Student Discipline

Prior to the intervention, an initial assessment was conducted to identify the students' disciplinary conditions across several key indicators. The assessment focused on compliance with school regulations, punctuality, academic responsibility, awareness of values and social norms, personal orderliness and self-discipline, and initiative and active participation. The results provide a baseline for identifying areas of disciplinary strength and weakness and for determining the aspects that require greater attention through the intervention. The initial discipline levels for each indicator are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Initial Discipline Level Based on Each Indicator

Discipline Indicator	Actual Score	Ideal Score	Percentage	Category
Compliance with school regulations	58	96	60%	Fair
Punctuality in school activities	52	96	54%	Fair
Responsibility for academic obligations	49	96	51%	Fair
Awareness of values and social norms	63	96	66%	Fair
Personal orderliness and self-discipline	47	96	49%	Fair
Initiative and active participation	55	96	57%	Fair
Total	324	576	56%	Fair

Before the intervention, students' discipline was measured using a psychological discipline scale. As presented in Table 5, the overall discipline level was categorized as Fair, with an average percentage of 56%. Among the six discipline indicators, awareness of values and social norms achieved the highest percentage (66%), indicating that students generally understood the importance of appropriate behavior in school. However, the indicators of personal orderliness and self-discipline (49%) and responsibility for academic obligations (51%) showed the lowest percentages, suggesting that students still experienced difficulties in maintaining consistent disciplinary behavior and fulfilling their responsibilities independently.

Improvement in Student Discipline

The implementation of group guidance integrated with behavior contract techniques resulted in a substantial improvement in students' disciplinary behavior. As presented in Table 4, all eight participants demonstrated higher discipline scores after completing the intervention. The average discipline score increased from 41% in the pretest to 77% in the posttest, representing an average improvement of 36 percentage points. These findings indicate that the intervention

was effective in strengthening students' discipline across various behavioral aspects. Figure 1 illustrates the comparison between students' discipline scores before and after the intervention. The graph clearly shows that each participant achieved a higher posttest score than pretest score, indicating positive behavioral changes following the implementation of behavior contract-based group guidance.

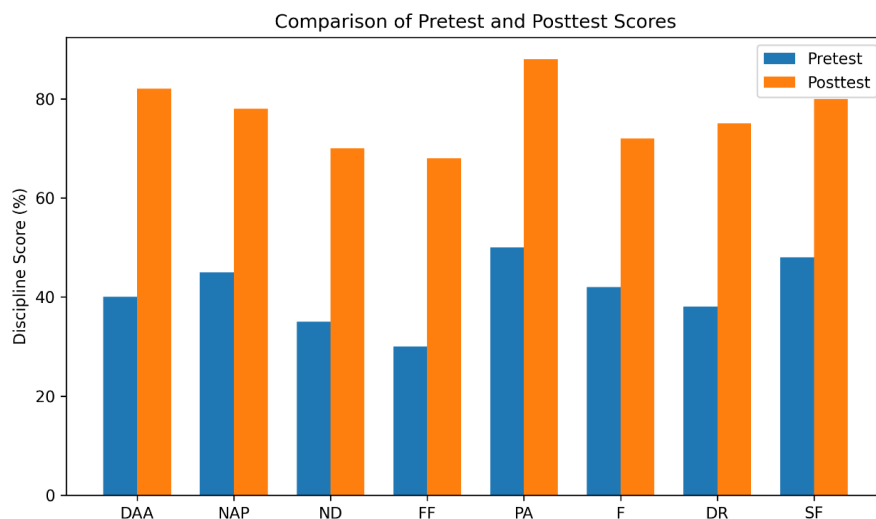


Figure 1. Improvement in Student Discipline Before and After the Intervention

The results also revealed variations in the magnitude of improvement among participants. Student DAA demonstrated the highest improvement, with an increase of 42 percentage points, while student F showed the lowest improvement, with an increase of 30 percentage points. Despite these differences, every participant experienced meaningful progress in disciplinary behavior after participating in the counseling program. To provide a clearer overview of the individual improvements, Figure 2 presents the percentage increase in discipline scores achieved by each participant.

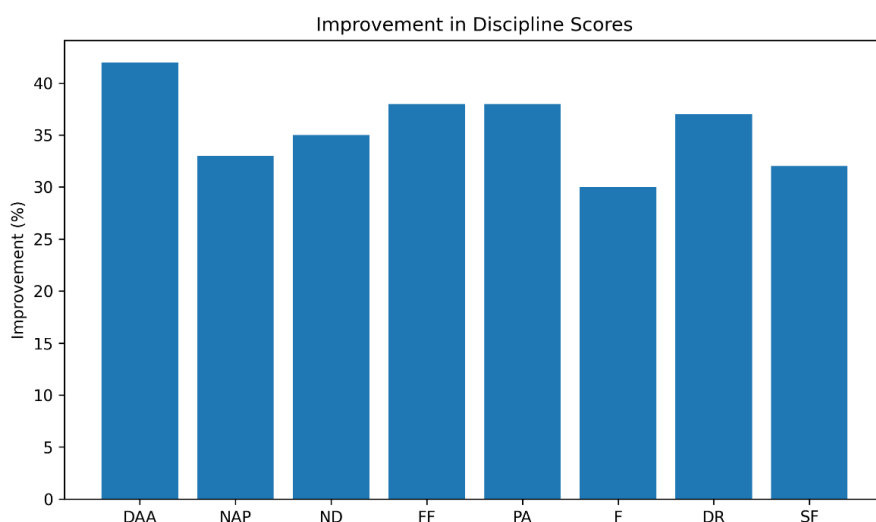


Figure 2. Percentage of Improvement in Students' Discipline Scores

As shown in Figure 2, the improvements in students' disciplinary behavior ranged from 30% to 42%, indicating that the intervention produced positive outcomes across all participants.

The highest improvements were achieved by DAA (42%), followed by FF (38%), PA (38%), and DR (37%). Meanwhile, ND (35%), NAP (33%), SF (32%), and F (30%) also demonstrated consistent increases in their discipline scores. Although the magnitude of improvement varied among participants, the overall pattern indicates that the intervention contributed to meaningful behavioral development. These improvements were reflected in students' greater responsibility, punctuality, compliance with school regulations, and participation in school activities, suggesting that the behavior contract approach supported the gradual development of more consistent disciplinary behaviors.

Overall, the quantitative findings presented in Table 4, Figure 1, and Figure 2 demonstrate a consistent positive change in students' discipline following the implementation of group guidance using behavior contract techniques. The increase in discipline scores across all participants provides empirical evidence that the intervention contributed to strengthening students' behavioral commitment and compliance with established school regulations. The findings also indicate that the intervention was not limited to improving individual disciplinary scores but was associated with broader improvements in students' responsibility and behavioral consistency. Thus, the quantitative results provide substantial support for the use of behavior contract-based group guidance as an intervention for strengthening student discipline in the vocational high school context.

Reflection Findings in Cycle I

Reflection was conducted at the end of Cycle I to evaluate the implementation of group guidance using behavior contract techniques and to identify aspects requiring improvement before proceeding to the next cycle. The reflection findings indicated that most participants had begun to understand the importance of discipline in supporting both academic activities and compliance with school regulations. Students demonstrated greater awareness of arriving at school on time, completing assignments according to deadlines, participating actively in learning activities, and following school rules without continuous supervision. In addition, students expressed a better understanding of the purpose of the behavior contract and recognized that the agreement encouraged them to become more responsible for their own behavior.

Despite these positive developments, the reflection process also revealed several limitations that reduced the effectiveness of the intervention during Cycle I. Although students understood the expected disciplined behaviors, several participants were still inconsistent in implementing the commitments stated in their behavior contracts. Some students continued to require reminders from the school counselor to maintain punctuality, complete academic tasks responsibly, and comply consistently with school regulations. Furthermore, participation during group discussions had not yet reached the expected level, as several participants remained hesitant to express their opinions, share personal experiences, or respond to other group members. These findings suggested that the reinforcement strategies applied during Cycle I had not yet fully strengthened students' commitment to disciplined behavior.

Based on these reflection findings, several improvements were planned for Cycle II. The researcher and the school counselor agreed to strengthen positive reinforcement, provide more intensive monitoring of students' behavior contracts, encourage greater participation during group discussions, and deliver regular feedback regarding students' behavioral progress. Students were also encouraged to support one another in maintaining the commitments they had established in their behavior contracts. These improvements were expected to enhance

students' self-monitoring skills, strengthen their commitment to disciplined behavior, and increase the overall effectiveness of the intervention. Overall, the reflection findings served as the basis for revising the implementation strategy in Cycle II. By addressing the weaknesses identified during Cycle I, the researcher expected that the subsequent intervention would produce more consistent and sustainable improvements in students' disciplinary behavior.

Observation Findings in Cycle II

Observation during Cycle II was conducted collaboratively with the school counselor using a structured observation sheet to assess students' participation, communication, group interaction, implementation of behavior contracts, and disciplinary behavior throughout the intervention. The observation focused on identifying behavioral changes following the improvements made after Cycle I and evaluating the extent to which the revised intervention procedures were implemented effectively. The observation findings from Cycle II are presented in the following table.

Table 4. Observation Findings in Cycle II

Observation Aspect	Observation Results
Student participation	Students participated more actively during group guidance sessions.
Communication skills	Students became more confident in expressing opinions and responding to peers.
Group interaction	Group discussions were more interactive and conducive than in Cycle I.
Implementation of behavior contracts	Students demonstrated greater commitment to implementing the agreed behavior contracts.
Discipline during activities	Students showed improved punctuality, responsibility, and compliance with school regulations.
Overall implementation	The intervention was implemented effectively according to the planned procedures.

Observation during Cycle II was conducted collaboratively by the school counselor using a structured observation sheet. The observation aimed to evaluate both the implementation of group guidance sessions and the development of students' disciplinary behavior throughout the intervention. The observation results indicated considerable improvements compared with Cycle I. Students participated more actively during group discussions and demonstrated greater confidence in expressing their opinions, asking questions, and responding to other group members. The counseling sessions became more interactive, communicative, and conducive, allowing students to exchange experiences and reflect on their disciplinary behavior in a supportive learning environment.

The implementation of group guidance also showed significant improvement. All stages of the counseling process, including the formation, transition, working, and termination stages, were carried out systematically according to the planned procedures. Furthermore, the behavior contract technique was implemented more consistently, enabling students to understand their behavioral commitments more clearly and encouraging them to take greater responsibility for maintaining disciplined behavior.

Behavioral changes were also observed throughout Cycle II. Students demonstrated better punctuality, greater responsibility in completing academic tasks, increased compliance with

school regulations, and stronger commitment to the behavioral agreements they had established. These findings indicate that the improvements introduced after the reflection of Cycle I contributed positively to the effectiveness of the intervention. Overall, the observation findings suggest that behavior contract-based group guidance was implemented successfully during Cycle II and effectively supported the improvement of students' disciplinary behavior.

Interview Findings

Interviews were conducted at the end of the intervention with the participating students and the school counselor to obtain a deeper understanding of students' perceptions of the group guidance activities using behavior contract techniques. The interview findings were intended to complement the quantitative results obtained from the psychological discipline scale and classroom observations.

The participating students generally reported that the group guidance sessions helped them understand the importance of discipline in both academic and personal contexts. They stated that the behavior contract encouraged them to become more responsible for their actions because they had personally agreed to implement the disciplinary behaviors specified in the contract. Several students also explained that they became more motivated to arrive at school on time, complete assignments according to deadlines, and comply with school regulations because they wished to fulfill the commitments they had made during the counseling sessions.

From the perspective of the school counselor, the implementation of behavior contract-based group guidance had a positive influence on students' disciplinary behavior. The counselor observed that students became more active during counseling sessions, demonstrated greater confidence in expressing their opinions, and showed increased responsibility in carrying out their academic obligations. Furthermore, the counselor reported noticeable improvements in students' punctuality, classroom participation, and compliance with school regulations compared with their behavior before the intervention.

Overall, the interview findings supported the quantitative and observational results. Students acknowledged that the behavior contract promoted greater self-awareness and personal responsibility, while the school counselor confirmed that the intervention contributed to positive behavioral changes in the school environment. These findings strengthen the conclusion that integrating behavior contract techniques into group guidance services can effectively improve students' disciplinary behavior.

Discussion

The improvement in student discipline observed in this study is consistent with previous research highlighting the effectiveness of group guidance services in fostering disciplined behavior through group dynamics and peer interaction. Group guidance enables students to develop self-awareness, social responsibility, and positive behavioral changes through interaction, discussion, and shared learning experiences within the group (Prayitno, 2012; Lestari & Yusuf, 2021). The group setting provides students with opportunities to share experiences, receive feedback, and reflect on their behavioral patterns, thereby creating a supportive environment for developing more adaptive and responsible behaviors. Through this process, students are encouraged to recognize their behavioral strengths and weaknesses while developing greater awareness of the importance of discipline in their daily school activities.

The use of behavior contract techniques in this study also played an important role in strengthening students' commitment to disciplined behavior. Written behavioral agreements encouraged students to take greater responsibility for their actions and promoted consistency in implementing the expected behaviors. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting that behavior contracts can improve students' responsibility, compliance with school regulations, and disciplined behavior in educational settings (Munawaroh & Hidayat, 2022; Hafid et al., 2022). By clearly defining behavioral expectations and consequences, the contracts provided students with concrete guidelines for monitoring and improving their daily behavior. In this way, students were not only expected to follow rules but were also encouraged to understand, commit to, and evaluate the behaviors they had agreed to develop.

The findings further demonstrate that behavior contract techniques can be particularly effective when integrated into group guidance services. Written behavioral agreements encouraged students to perceive discipline as a personal commitment rather than merely an external obligation imposed by school regulations. Through repeated discussion, monitoring, and evaluation, students were encouraged to recognize the consequences of their behavior and gradually develop greater ownership of the agreed behavioral targets. This process is consistent with the principles of behavioral counseling, which emphasize clear behavioral expectations, reinforcement, and consistency in shaping positive behavior (Skinner, 1953). The integration of these elements allowed students to receive both structured behavioral direction and social support, making the process of behavioral change more meaningful and sustainable.

The findings are also consistent with recent international studies emphasizing the importance of self-regulation in promoting positive student behavior. Andersson and Granberg (2022) reported that structured learning interventions encouraging students to monitor and evaluate their own behavior significantly improved self-regulated learning. Similarly, Cameron et al. (2022) found that behavioral self-regulation positively contributes to students' social-emotional development and classroom behavior. These findings support the present study, in which behavior contracts encouraged students to monitor their disciplinary commitments, evaluate their behavioral progress, and gradually internalize responsible behavior through repeated practice and reflection. The observed improvement therefore suggests that behavioral contracts may function not only as external control mechanisms but also as tools that facilitate the gradual development of students' internal self-regulation.

The effectiveness of group guidance in this study can also be attributed to peer interaction and shared reflection. Through group discussions, students learned from one another's experiences, evaluated their own behavior, and developed greater awareness of the consequences of indiscipline. The collaborative atmosphere encouraged students to provide mutual support, feedback, and motivation, which strengthened their commitment to maintaining disciplined behavior. Such interaction is consistent with the principles of group guidance, in which group members can develop personal and social competencies through communication, shared experiences, and constructive interaction (Prayitno, 2012; Corey, 2017). The group process therefore provided an opportunity for students to recognize that disciplinary challenges were not experienced individually and that behavioral improvement could be supported through constructive interaction with peers.

Furthermore, the significant improvement observed in Cycle II highlights the importance of reflective practice within Guidance and Counseling Action Research. The refinement of reinforcement strategies, more consistent behavioral monitoring, and continuous feedback

contributed to strengthening students' commitment to their behavior contracts. These findings are in line with previous studies indicating that behavior contracts are more effective when implemented collaboratively and accompanied by regular evaluation and reinforcement (Rahmatullah, 2021; Hafid et al., 2022). Boyer (2023) similarly explained that self-regulation develops through repeated opportunities for self-monitoring, behavioral reflection, and personal evaluation. This supports the present finding that students gradually demonstrated stronger responsibility and discipline as they repeatedly practiced, reviewed, and evaluated the behavioral commitments established during the intervention.

The collaborative involvement of the school counselor also contributed substantially to the success of the intervention. The counselor facilitated group discussions, monitored students' behavioral development, provided feedback, and evaluated the implementation of each action cycle. This involvement ensured that the intervention remained responsive to students' specific disciplinary needs and could be adjusted according to the findings obtained during each cycle. The collaborative process between the researcher, counselor, and students also strengthened the practical application of group guidance within the vocational school environment. Such collaboration was particularly important in maintaining continuity between the behavioral commitments established during counseling sessions and their implementation in students' daily school activities.

Overall, the findings suggest that integrating behavior contract techniques into group guidance services provides a practical and effective counseling strategy for strengthening student discipline. The intervention not only improved students' compliance with school regulations but also encouraged responsibility, self-control, self-regulation, and greater behavioral consistency. The combination of structured behavioral commitments, peer interaction, continuous monitoring, and reflective evaluation provided a comprehensive framework for behavioral improvement. Therefore, behavior contract-based group guidance can be considered a relevant guidance and counseling strategy, particularly in vocational high schools where discipline is closely related to academic responsibility, practical learning, and future work readiness. This approach may also serve as a practical model for counselors seeking to address disciplinary problems through structured, participatory, and developmentally oriented interventions.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that behavior contract-based group guidance can effectively strengthen student discipline among Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Nanga Pinoh. The initial assessment showed various disciplinary problems, with a mean discipline score of 41%, indicating a low level of discipline. Following the intervention, the mean score increased to 77%, representing an average improvement of 36 percentage points, and all participants reached the "Good" category. The findings also indicate that the Guidance and Counseling Action Research approach supported continuous improvement of the intervention through reflection, behavioral monitoring, reinforcement, feedback, and refinement between cycles. Students demonstrated greater responsibility, punctuality, compliance with school regulations, participation, and commitment to their behavior contracts. These findings suggest that integrating behavior contract techniques into group guidance provides a practical counseling strategy for strengthening student discipline by combining structured behavioral commitments, peer interaction, reflection, and continuous evaluation. However, because the study involved only eight students in a specific vocational school context, the findings should be interpreted within the characteristics of the research setting. Future studies are encouraged

to involve larger samples, longer follow-up periods, and comparative research designs to examine the sustainability and broader applicability of behavior contract-based group guidance in improving student discipline.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The author was responsible for the research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of the findings, and manuscript preparation. The collaborating school counselor contributed to the implementation of the intervention and assisted in evaluating the research process and outcomes. All contributors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

COMPETING OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to this research.

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