


The Effect of Group Counseling with Cognitive Defusion Technique in Cognitive Behavior Therapy to Enhance Self-Confidence

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the effect of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) group counseling using cognitive defusion techniques to increase students' self-confidence at Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School. Adolescents' low self-confidence is a critical issue in education, considering that puberty is a sensitive period for forming self-concept. The decreasing self-confidence in junior high school students can be seen in withdrawn behavior, difficulty interacting socially, and the inability to express one's potential optimally. The research used a true-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group design. From a population of 103 students, a sample of 14 students was selected through purposive sampling and divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received group counseling intervention for 6 meetings. The research instrument is a questionnaire with 19 items that have been tested for validity ($r_{count} 0.499-0.612 > r_{table} 0.497$) and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha $X=0.850$; $Y=0.735$). Data analysis used the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, Levene's Test of homogeneity, and paired sample t-test. Cognitive defusion techniques are focused on helping students not become over-identified with negative thoughts, allowing them to take a more objective perspective on internal experiences. The results showed a significant difference in the experimental group ($t=16.644$; $p=0.000<0.05$) with an increase in scores from 52.29 to 86.71, while the control group did not show a significant change ($t=0.669$; $p=0.528>0.05$). In conclusion, CBT group counseling with cognitive defusion techniques effectively increases junior high school students' self-confidence through mechanisms for separating themselves from negative thoughts, developing adaptive thinking patterns, and strengthening personal competence.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transition period marked by significant biological, socio-emotional, and cognitive changes. Santrock emphasized that during this period, teenagers experience a rapid developmental transition process, requiring them to adapt to various situations (Halik & Rakasiwi, 2020). Teenagers' inability to adapt to these changes often causes them to fall into a lack of self-confidence.

Booth (2022) revealed that teenagers' occupational aspirations closely correlate with psychological well-being, with self-confidence as a key factor determining their achievements. Self-confidence is a fundamental aspect of adolescent development. Adolescents with low self-confidence show characteristics such as always being hesitant in making decisions, easily anxious, not having confidence in their abilities, tending to avoid, closing themselves off, lacking initiative, easily giving up, and being afraid of appearing in public. Lauster (in Halik & Rakasawi, 2020) explains that in

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interpersonal relationships, low self-confidence manifests itself as shame, confusion, and excessive humility, which can disrupt the process of adolescents' adjustment to their social environment.

In an academic context, self-confidence plays an important role in achieving learning goals. Students with high self-confidence will be learning-oriented, able to overcome learning difficulties, not give up easily, and try to achieve goals with their abilities. On the other hand, students with low self-confidence tend to be easily influenced and unable to develop their potential optimally (Saputra & Prasetiawan, 2024). Research by Thompson et al. (2008) provides an in-depth perspective on the complexity of forming self-confidence in adolescents. They emphasize that self-confidence is not just a static construct, but a dynamic process influenced by complex interactions between internal and external factors. Furthermore, Islam (2020) added that modern psychological interventions must consider individual diversity in developing strategies to increase self-confidence.

Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School is a junior high school educational institution built based on Islamic values. This school was established in an effort to integrate general education with Islamic religious education so that it is able to produce a generation that not only excels in academics but also has noble morals and a deep understanding of religion. In its learning process, Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School applies the national curriculum enriched with Islamic content. Activities such as congregational prayers and reading the Koran. Even though it has a strong Islamic education base, Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School is not free from various problems commonly occurring among middle school-age teenagers. One of the phenomena identified is low self-confidence in some students. The phenomenon of low self-confidence is seen in Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School students. Based on data obtained by researchers during the preliminary study, 14 students showed indicators of low self-confidence, with details of 6 students in class VII, 4 students in class VIII, and 4 students in class IX. These indications can be seen from the behavior of students who find it difficult to express opinions in public, experience stage fright, refuse to present in front of the class, and are not confident in their abilities.

The study of self-confidence from an Islamic perspective also has a strong foundation. In the Qur'an, Surah Ali Imran verse 139 emphasizes that believers should not act weakly and be sad because they have a high rank. This verse indicates that self-confidence in the Islamic context is interpreted as the absence of fear, sadness, and anxiety in individuals who are faithful and steadfast (Mamlu'ah, 2019).

Various counseling approaches have been developed to overcome self-confidence problems in adolescents. One approach that shows effectiveness is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). CBT is a counseling approach that focuses on correcting distorted cognition resulting from events that harm individuals physically and psychologically. J.S. Beck defines CBT as therapy that aims to modify cognition or perception of problems to change emotions and behavior (Fitriani, 2017).

Cognitive defusion, as one of the techniques in CBT, offers a promising approach to increasing self-confidence. This technique aims to reduce resistance to unpleasant thoughts or experiences through cognitive reorganization and reduction of unnecessary functions. Masuda explains the technique of cognitive defusion in three stages: (a) appropriate treatment, (b) demolition drills, and (c) mental repetition of the target word for 30 seconds (Chairunisya et al., 2022).

In their study, Hayes et al. (2006) emphasized the importance of more flexible and comprehensive contemporary counseling approaches. They identified that today's psychological interventions do not simply focus on improving symptoms but on developing adaptive skills and psychological resilience. Kazantzis et al. (2022) support this perspective with empirical evidence on the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in providing alternative interventions that are more responsive to the developmental needs of adolescents. Group counseling with a CBT technique approach to cognitive defusion was chosen as an intervention in this study based on the consideration that this approach could facilitate changes in negative thought patterns that underlie

students' low self-confidence. Through group settings, students also get the opportunity to share experiences and get support from peers facing similar problems.

Sriyono (2017) identified the characteristics of individuals with low self-confidence, including refusing to try new things, feeling unloved, tending to blame others, having rigid emotions, being easily frustrated, underestimating one's abilities, and being easily influenced by other people. Dean (2014) also added characteristics such as avoiding eye contact, being emotionally reactive, being passive in communication, being reluctant to ask for help, experiencing stage fright, and having difficulty adapting to new environments. In the context of adolescent development, Imro'atun (2017) emphasized that self-confidence is an essential factor in helping adolescents achieve their goals. Adolescents with self-confidence are characterized by an enthusiastic attitude, hard work, high motivation, and never giving up. The level of adolescent self-confidence is reflected in daily activities at school, including the teaching and learning process, interactions with teachers and friends, and individual activities.

Literature Review

The cognitive defusion technique, as part of CBT, is described by Chairunisya et al. (2022) as an attempt to find a way to connect thinking with cognitive reorganization and reduce unnecessary functions. Saputra and Prasetyawan (2024) in their research proved that the technique of cognitive defusion is effective for increasing students' self-confidence through changing the context of the problem faced by modifying the language in the counselee's mind.

Group counseling as an intervention format also has a strong theoretical basis. Lumongga (2017) define group counseling as assistance to individuals in group situations that is preventive and healing and is directed at facilitating development and growth. The group format allows for communication and interaction that can help solve problems collectively with the help of a counselor.

Several previous studies have reported findings similar to this research, particularly those examining the use of cognitive defusion techniques in group counseling to improve students' self-confidence. Masuda et al. (2010) found that cognitive defusion interventions help middle school students create psychological distance from self-deprecating thoughts, thereby reducing the negative impact of such thoughts on their self-confidence. Furthermore, Whiting et al. (2013) reported that defusion exercises, such as "name the thought" and "say the thought in a funny voice," were effective in reducing students' belief in negative self-related thoughts and increasing their willingness to participate in social activities at school. Similarly, Nurhidayati (2024) found that students who received cognitive defusion interventions showed a significant increase in self-confidence. This improvement was particularly evident in their ability to express opinions and make decisions (Sulistiyowati, 2019).

The research results indicate that cognitive defusion techniques effectively help students detach from negative labels given by bullies, enabling them to rebuild positive self-perceptions and increase self-confidence (Siregar, 2025). Furthermore, Ghomian and Shairi (2022) reported that students who received cognitive defusion interventions were able to overcome fears and self-doubt related to their academic abilities, making them more confident in facing future educational challenges. In addition, a study involving junior high school students who experienced self-confidence and social anxiety problems found that group counseling interventions using cognitive defusion techniques conducted over several sessions were effective in increasing students' self-confidence and reducing their social anxiety compared to those in the control group. The difference was statistically significant, and the positive effects of the intervention were maintained during the follow-up period.

Weisz et al. (2018), in their comprehensive meta-analysis comparing various psychotherapies for adolescents, showed that evidence-based interventions such as CBT consistently provide better outcomes than conventional services. Stallard (2020) added that the development of modern

psychological interventions increasingly leads to a more integrative and contextual approach. The CBT intervention to increase self-confidence has received strong empirical support. Yahya and Megalia (2017) explain CBT as a counseling approach based on a specific understanding of the client, including beliefs and behavior patterns. Wahyu et al. (2024) found that CBT effectively increases self-confidence because this approach focuses on changing incorrect thinking and modifying cognitive systems to make individuals more effective.

The urgency of this research lies in the high prevalence of self-confidence problems in adolescents, which can have a negative impact on their academic, social, and psychological development. The CBT approach with cognitive defusion techniques integrated into group counseling offers a potentially effective and efficient intervention. It is hoped that this research can significantly contribute to the development of counseling models in Indonesia and provide practical guidance for Guidance and Counseling teachers in increasing students' self-confidence.

Based on the description of the theoretical study that has been presented regarding technical group counseling, cognitive defusion, and self-confidence, and through analysis of the thinking framework that has been systematically prepared, researchers can formulate research hypotheses as a basis for empirical testing. A research hypothesis is a temporary answer to a problem that has been identified and needs to be tested for truth through data collection. In the context of this research, hypothesis testing will provide a concrete picture of whether there is an effect of the technical group counseling intervention on cognitive defusion to increase self-confidence in students at Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School. The hypotheses proposed in this research are as follows:

Hypothesis

H0: There was no effect of technical group counseling cognitive defusion to improve self-confidence in Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School students.

H1: Technical group counseling cognitive defusion influences on improving students' self-confidence at Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School.

The alternative hypothesis proposed reflects the researcher's assumption that the intervention provided in the form of group counseling with techniques of cognitive defusion will have a positive impact on increasing students' self-confidence. This conjecture is based on the principle of cognitive defusion, which helps students change their relationship with negative thoughts that have hindered their self-confidence. This hypothesis will be tested through an experimental research design with a quantitative approach, as described in the research methods section.

METHODS

Design

This research uses an accurate/pure experimental design method (true-experiment design). True experimental design is an experimental research method that has the highest level of control because it meets the main requirements for the validity of experimental research, namely randomization, manipulation, and control, with the type of research pre-test, post-test, and control group design. With the following research design in Figure 1.

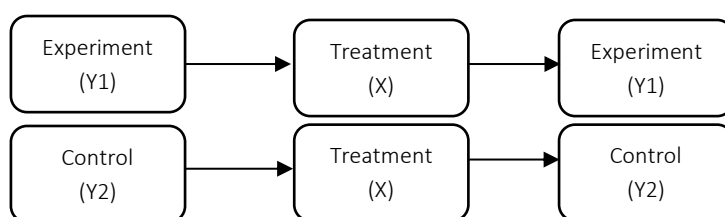


Figure 1. Experimental Pretest Posttest Control Group Design

Instruments

Validity and reliability tests were carried out using SPSS version 20. In this study, validity testing was carried out on 14 respondents. Decision making based on r value r_{count} (corrected item-total correlation) $> r_{\text{table}}$ of 0.497, for $df = 14-2$ ($n-2$) = 7; = 0.05 (5%), with the validity test score for variables x and y showing that all items (19 statements) of the questionnaire are declared valid with a value of r_{count} ranges from 0.499 to 0.612 which is greater than r_{table} 0.497. Meanwhile, reliability is said to be reliable because the score from the variable is $0.850 > 0.7$, so all data can be used for further analysis. The instruments used in this research are surveys, observations, and questionnaires, see Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Validity Score

No	R Count	R Table	Information
1	0,582	0,497	VALID
2	0,548	0,497	VALID
3	0,531	0,497	VALID
4	0,507	0,497	VALID
5	0,519	0,497	VALID
6	0,577	0,497	VALID
7	0,543	0,497	VALID
8	0,564	0,497	VALID
9	0,568	0,497	VALID
10	0,579	0,497	VALID
11	0,582	0,497	VALID
12	0,509	0,497	VALID
13	0,526	0,497	VALID
14	0,612	0,497	VALID
15	0,549	0,497	VALID
16	0,499	0,497	VALID
17	0,546	0,497	VALID
18	0,612	0,497	VALID
19.	0,544	0,497	VALID

Table 2. Reliability Scores

No	Respondent	Statement	Valid	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	14	19	100%	0,850

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this research uses SPSS with the paired T-test technique (paired Sample T-Test). This technique is used because researchers test differences between two groups. Before the T-Test, the researcher will carry out an Assumption Test, namely the Normality Test and Homogeneity Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The normality test was carried out using the Shapiro-Wilk test, the amount of data was less than 50. The basis for decision-making was using levels alpha 5% or 0.05 if the sig value is > 0.05 , then the normality assumption is met, and if < 0.05 then the normality assumption is not met. The results of the normality test for the control group pretest with a sig of 0.722 and the experimental group with a sig of 0.210, then the posttest for the control group with a sig of 0.196 and the experimental group with a sig of 0.250. It is known that the sig value for each pretest and posttest data in each class is greater than 0.05. This means that the normality assumption is met, see Table 3.

Table 3. Data Normality Test Score

Test	Class	N	Sig
Pre-test	Control	7	0,722
	Experiment	7	0,210
Post-test	Control	7	0,196
	Experiment	7	0,250

The data homogeneity test was carried out using statistical techniques levene's Test. The basis for decision-making uses an alpha level of 5% or 0.05, if >0.05 , then the homogeneity assumption is met, and if <0.05 , then the homogeneity assumption is not met. Firstly, the sig value from the pretest is 0.439. This sig value is greater than 0.05. This means the pretest data for the control and experimental classes have homogeneous variants, see Table 4.

Table 4. Data Homogeneity Test Score

Test	F	Df ₁	Df ₂	Sig
Pre-test	0,640	1	12	0,439
Post-test	0,013	1	12	0,911

Meanwhile, the results of the research show that there is a significant difference between the results before and after conducting group counseling for students who experience low self-confidence using the techniques of cognitive defusion. Based on the T-Test results, the sig value is 0.000 (<0.05), indicating that this method effectively increases students' self-confidence, see Table 5.

Table 5. Paired Sample T-test Scores

Group	Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	T value	P value
Experiment	52,29	86,71	16,644	0,000
Control	53,00	52,14	0,669	0,528

For the pretest value, the average (mean) was 52.29, while for the posttest value, the average value (mean) was 86.71. The number of respondents used as research samples was 7 students. The std deviation value in the pretest was 4.231, and the posttest was 2.812. Because the average (mean) value of the technical group counseling results cognitive defusion in increasing students' self-confidence in the pretest $52.29 < 86.71$ in the experimental class, then that means descriptively there is an average difference between before and after technical group counseling was carried out cognitive defusion between pretest and posttest experiment.

For the pretest value, the average (mean) was 53.00, while for the posttest value, the average value (mean) was 52.14. The number of respondents used as research samples was 7 students. The std deviation value in the pretest was 3.559, and the posttest was 2.410. Because the average value (mean) of the pretest and posttest results in the control and experimental classes decreased, these changes were relatively small and could be considered normal fluctuations.

The pretest-posttest sig value obtained for the experimental group was 0.000, where $0.000 < 0.005$, it can be concluded that H_0 was rejected and H_1 accepted. There is an average difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test experimental group, which can be interpreted as an influence of increasing the use of technical group counseling cognitive defusion in increasing students' self-confidence. For the sig value. pre-test post-test, the control group was 0.528, where $0.528 > 0.005$, it was concluded that there was no significant difference for the control class because the sig value was above 0.005.

Discussion

Group counseling is a form of guidance and counseling service carried out in a group setting by utilizing group dynamics to help group members solve their problems. According to Prayitno (2017), group counseling is assisting with counseling interviews by an expert to several people at once who

are small group members to develop themselves, alleviating problems experienced by group members by utilizing group dynamics. O'Connor and Casey's (2020) research revealed unique mechanisms in group counseling that facilitate increased self-confidence. The group format provides therapeutic intervention and creates a space for sharing experiences and significant social support. Leahy (2019) supports this perspective by emphasizing the importance of a personal approach that considers individual context in group settings.

Meanwhile, Corey (2023) defines group counseling as a dynamic interpersonal process that focuses on conscious thoughts and behavior and involves therapeutic functions that enable individuals to develop self-understanding, acceptance, and growth in a group context. Through group counseling, individuals can discuss and explore issues related to their feelings, attitudes, values, and behavior in a supportive and trusting atmosphere.

Thompson and Gauntlett-Gilbert (2008) provide an in-depth analysis of the mechanisms of cognitive defusion in therapy. They identified that this technique not only helps individuals change their association with negative thoughts but also promotes fundamental cognitive flexibility. Kashdan and Rottenberg (2019) further emphasized that psychological flexibility is a key component of mental health that facilitates individual adaptation to various challenges.

Weisz et al. (2018) presented strong empirical evidence of the superiority of evidence-based psychotherapy, especially CBT, in treating adolescent psychological problems. They found that this approach consistently provided better results in developing adaptation skills and reducing negative psychological symptoms. Stallard (2020) added that the evolution of modern psychological interventions is increasingly leading to a more comprehensive and contextual approach.

As for the treatment (treatment), the implementation of group counseling was carried out in 6 meetings with 7 group members (experiment). From the results of observations, the implementation was very effective. The stages of implementing group counseling using techniques of cognitive defusion are as follows, which can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Stages of Counseling Activities

Level	Level Name	Activity	Objective
1.	Stages of Formation	Introduction of group members and counselors, Explaining the purpose of group counseling, Explaining the principles of counseling (confidentiality, voluntariness, openness), Games to build group cohesiveness, Making group agreements/contracts, and Initial introduction to the concept of cognitive defusion	Building rapport and trust, creating positive group dynamics, and providing an initial understanding of group counseling and cognitive defusion
2.	Transition Level	Reviewing the activities of the previous stage, asking about the readiness of group members, overcoming members' obstacles/reluctance, strengthening member motivation, Observing the behavior of group members, and A more in-depth introduction to cognitive defusion.	Ensuring members' readiness for the next stage, increasing group member commitment, and identifying obstacles that may arise
3.	Problem Exploration Stage	Identification of negative thoughts that affect self-confidence, Discussion about the impact of negative thoughts on behavior, sharing experiences about situations of low self-confidence, Recognizing thought patterns that hinder, Mapping negative automatic thoughts for each member and Self-reflection on the source of negative thoughts.	Identifying negative thoughts that hamper self-confidence, Understanding the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and increasing the self-awareness of group members
4.	Technique Application Level cognitive defusion	"Thoughts on Paper" Exercise (writing down negative thoughts), "Naming Thoughts" Technique (labeling negative thoughts), "Saying Thoughts in a Different Tone" Practice, "Leaves in the River" Practice (imagining thoughts as leaves)	Separating oneself from negative thoughts, reducing the influence of negative thoughts on self-concept, training the ability not to identify oneself with thoughts, and

		and "Watching Thoughts" Exercise (watching thoughts as spectators).	increasing the ability to accept thoughts without getting caught up in them
5.	Reinforcement and Application Stage	Role plays situations that challenge self-confidence, Planning the application of techniques in real situations, Discussion of challenges that may be faced, Reflection and positive reinforcement exercises, Creating individual action plans, and Peer support and feedback between members.	Strengthen cognitive defusion skills, increase self-confidence in real situations, develop strategies for facing challenges and build a support system between group members
6.	End Stage	Reflection on the counseling process and results, sharing feelings and experiences during the process, Evaluation of perceived changes, Individual follow-up planning, Commitment to sustainable practice, and closing with group positive reinforcement activities	Reviewing achievements and changes that have occurred, affirming commitment to apply skills, reinforcing positive changes that have been achieved, and Providing support for continuity of practice

Implications

This research significantly contributes to developing counseling interventions to increase adolescent self-confidence through a Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) approach with cognitive defusion techniques. Theoretically, this study enriches guidance and counseling science by providing empirical evidence about the mechanisms of cognitive defusion in changing negative thinking patterns in adolescents, while practically, this research provides concrete guidance for Guidance and Counseling teachers to design systematic interventions that can increase students' self-confidence. Further implications include the development of a comprehensive and sustainable group counseling model and encouraging the creation of evidence-based preventive programs to support adolescents' psychological health.

Limitation

This research faces several significant limitations that need to be addressed by future researchers, including methodological, contextual, and measurement aspects. Methodologically, the research has limitations in the relatively small sample size (14 students), which limits the generalization of the results, the scope of the research is limited to one school in the Punggur area, and the short intervention time span (six meetings), which may not be enough to produce long-term changes. From a contextual perspective, the research only focuses on students with indications of low self-confidence. It has not explored external factors that influence students' self-confidence nor compared the effectiveness of cognitive defusion techniques with other alternative counseling approaches. The measurement limitations include using a self-report questionnaire instrument, which has the potential to have subjectivity bias, and the absence of long-term follow-up measurements to ensure the sustainability of changes resulting from the intervention.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) group counseling using cognitive defusion techniques has a significant influence on increasing students' self-confidence at Sunan Ampel Punggur Middle School. Through a counseling process structured in six stages, students identify and separate themselves from negative thoughts hampering their self-confidence. Cognitive Defusion has proven effective in helping students change perspectives and develop more adaptive thinking patterns. The group dynamics formed during counseling are important in providing social support and learning opportunities between group members. Students can share experiences, provide feedback, and practice new skills in a safe and supportive environment. This research provides a practical contribution for Guidance

and Counseling (BK) teachers in developing intervention programs for students' self-confidence problems. The CBT approach with cognitive defusion techniques can be integrated into school guidance and counseling service programs, both as a curative intervention and as a preventive effort to optimize the development of student self-confidence.

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