

# Improving Disciplinary Behavior of High School Students through Behavior Contract Technique Counseling

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### ABSTRACT:

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of group counseling with behavior contract techniques to reduce undisciplined behavior in the school of students of SMAN 18 Surabaya. This type of classroom action research with qualitative methods is conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects consisted of four students recorded as tardy seven to thirteen times in one month based on documentation data of tardy records. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation of students' tardiness records at school. In the first cycle, the results of group counseling showed that tardiness was reduced to 2-3 times a week. In the second cycle, there was a significant decrease where there were no undisciplined learners because they already had a strong commitment to comply with the agreed behavior contract. The results of this study indicate that group counseling techniques using behavior contracts are effective in reducing undisciplined behavior in coming to school at SMA Negeri 18 Surabaya.

### KEYWORDS:

Disciplinary Behavior; High School Students; Behavior Contract Technique; Counseling

## 1. INTRODUCTION

School is a place to gain knowledge and experience. Not only getting academic education but students also learn about moral values, ethics, social skills, and discipline. However, one of the problems that often arises in schools regarding the problem of lack of discipline of students is undisciplined school behavior. One of the actions of juvenile delinquency is dominantly related to the form of self-discipline. A disciplinary attitude is a situation where individuals follow voluntarily and have a state of consciousness in themselves to be able to carry out behavioral rules (Harita et al., 2022). Discipline is a fundamental element in education that is not only reflected in indivi-

dual character but also affects the quality of learning holistically. Learner discipline is closely related to academic success and positive character development, which will impact their ability to face the challenges of life in the future. One form of discipline that is often in the spotlight is students' punctuality in attending school (Yuliyanto et al., 2018). Punctuality is an important indicator of a sense of responsibility and commitment of students to the learning process. However, the tardiness of students to go to school is still a serious problem in many educational institutions.

Undisciplined behavior is a form of one of the learners not being able to be in the place and time that has

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been jointly agreed upon beforehand (Gantini & Fauziati, 2021). School tardiness can be referred to as a problem that becomes an obstacle in the process of developing and achieving an academic goal of students (Rosni, 2021). The tardiness of students to school not only hinders the learning process in the classroom, but also has the potential to reduce learning motivation, either by students who are late or by students who feel disturbed by the entry of late students. For example, when learners are late to class, the focus of the learners in the class will be distracted. Sometimes they will laugh or cheer at the undisciplined learners. According to Supriyanto (2012), the tardiness of students coming to school has long and short-term effects. The long-term consequences are in the form of parents of students getting a call to attend school, declining grades, failing classes and it could be that if it is severe and there is no change from the students themselves, then they will be expelled from school. Then the short-term impact is a lack of concentration, hampered in terms of teaching and learning, disturbing other friends, and getting sanctions.

Undisciplined behavior in students is caused by individuals who are unable to manage themselves (Rahma, 2024). Self-management has an important role for anyone to achieve success in education. Self-management is the management carried out within oneself to be able to utilize and organize everything that exists in achieving its goals (Kendall et al., 2011).

The problem of lateness in going to school was encountered by researchers when carrying out Field Experience Practices at one of the State Senior High Schools in Surabaya. According to the results of observations made when carrying out Field Experience Practices at the school, some of the students were seen to be late in coming to school. The documentation of tardiness records also shows that there are students who are late every day. According to the results of the author's interviews with four students with the initials YL, DT, RV, and BS who were recorded as being late with a frequency of 7-13 times in one month and the duration of the delay was approximately 30-60 minutes. They argued that the causes of undisciplined behavior were due to intentional and unintentional factors. Intentional factors such as waiting for friends, relaxing too much at home, and delaying going to school. Then unintentional factors such as oversleeping, not being able to manage time well, the distance between home and school being quite far and there being no vehicle. The learner said that the reason he woke up late was because at night he did less important activities such as hanging out and playing games until late at night with his friends. So often he sleeps above one o'clock at night which causes him difficulty waking up in the morning.

This is in line with the results of interviews conducted with school counselors at the school that students are not disciplined for reasons of waking up late because

they sleep late, or there is no vehicle at home. School counselors have often called undisciplined learners and questioned them about it and reminded them to reduce these useless activities or activities, but students still do it because it has become a habit and if they don't hang out they will be shunned by their friends. Sanctions given by the school related to undisciplined students are standing in front of the flagpole then compactly together singing the national anthem Indonesia Raya and will be recorded in the school's student point violation book. If the frequency of tardiness is felt to be quite a lot, later students will be taken to the guidance and counseling room to be asked and explored regarding undisciplined going to school, if there is no change in students then the school counselor will give a parental summons. However, even though the school counselor calls the learner's parents, he still repeats the late behavior.

Undisciplined behavior can become a habit that is carried out repeatedly due to a sense of comfort so this attitude needs to be given quick and appropriate action (Shah, 2009). This requires special handling such as being given guidance and counseling services in the form of group counseling with a behavioral approach to behavior contract techniques. The school counselor also suggested that researchers use special techniques to deal with this delay problem (Tahira & Arif, 2016). Because previously it had never used special techniques in solving these problems. The hope of the school counselor, after being given with a behavioristic approach behavior contract technique in this group counseling setting there is a change in students in a better direction (Emily et al., 2015).

The behavioristic counseling approach according to Jaya et al (2024) is a process of modifying individual actions by reducing all negative habits and replacing them with positive and adaptive habits. The application of this counseling service applies the principle of operant conditioning, namely by providing rewards, reinforcement, and punishment. Some of these things are of course agreed upon by both parties so that the targets are clear and directed (Ekpang & Esuabana, 2016; Muslihah & Riswanto, 2020; Gatzounis et al., 2012; Yusra et al., 2022; Carmel et al., 2016). The behavioristic approach with the behavior contract technique explained by Gerald Corey, namely in the formation of the use of this technique that a process in shaping behavior is by reinforcing the new behavior created (Sukmana & Sukmana, 2022). Kőszegi (2014) explains that a behavior contract is an agreement made by two or more people to behave in a certain way and to receive a reward for that behavior. Agreement is a tool for children to better understand and appreciate their obligations to develop good social life habits.

This problem is more suitable if using a group counseling setting, students will be given space to share experiences, support each other, and work together to find a

way out. Group counseling is a form of counselor's efforts on counselees by utilizing the dynamics in the group to help students to be able to overcome the problems that occur (Shechtman, 2014).

The use of quantitative type research is used by researchers with the assumption that behavior contract techniques can reduce the behavior that is often done, namely the undisciplined behavior of students at school. It is hoped that the application of group counseling behavior contract techniques can reduce the number of students' tardiness in coming to school.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Research Design

This type of research is classroom action research. Classroom action research is conducted as a reflective form of action carried out by the teacher as a researcher, starting from a plan to an assessment carried out in the form of real classroom learning to improve deficiencies in the learning that has been carried out (Wulandari et al., 2019). Classroom action research aims to improve teacher professional performance and student learning activities. In addition, classroom action research serves to improve teachers' ability to carry out learning and services at school, including skills in applying various strategies, approaches, models, methods, or learning and service techniques (Utomo et al., 2024). Classroom action research is a procedure taken by school counselors with the aim of maximizing Guidance and Counseling services in schools so that they are more systematic (Yasa, et al., 2024). The cycle in this study consists of cycle I and cycle II where in each cycle there are 4 phases, namely the planning, implementation, observation, and reflection phases.

### 2.2 Research Object

The sample of this study consisted of 4 students who had a record of tardiness 7-13 times in one month seen from the documentation of tardiness records at school as well as the results of observations and interviews that had been conducted.

### 2.3 Data Collection

The data collection methods used are observation, interviews, and documentation of late records of students going to school.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

This study applied qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. Quantitative data analysis is used to identify improvements in the learning process, especially various actions documented through observation notes and photos, which will then be analyzed. All data collected will be organized and presented in descriptive form.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Result

The initial step taken is pre-cycle activities where researchers carry out observations and interviews with school counselors to find out the conditions of these students. From the documentation of tardiness records, it is known that students experience tardiness in going to school 7-13 times in one month. So the school counselor suggested to the researcher to do group counseling with special techniques such as behavior contract techniques. The following are the results of action research conducted in cycles 1 and 2:

#### a. Results of Cycle 1 Action Research

Implementation in cycle 1 includes planning, implementation, observation, and reflection phases. Among others:

##### 1) Planning

The planning stage includes identifying and analyzing the problems to be studied, namely problems that occur at school and finding problematic students based on BK document records, preparing the right type of counseling services, preparing observation and evaluation guides, compiling the required behavior contract sheets, and compiling a counseling schedule.

##### 2) Implementation/Action

The implementation stage consists of four steps, the four steps are described below:

First, the initial stage. This stage includes (1) greeting and warmly welcoming group members; (2) asking one of the members in the group to lead the prayer; (3) asking how the group members are; (4) then each group member introducing themselves in turn.

Second, is the transition stage. This stage includes (1) the group leader explaining why this counseling is held; (2) the group leader explaining the principles of the group counseling; and (2) the group leader asking about readiness to proceed to the next stage, namely activities. Third, the activity stage. This stage includes (1) the group leader choosing and determining the problem that will be discussed first; (2) group members telling stories related to what problems they are currently facing; (3) the group leader inviting a question and answer session to each member regarding what he is facing; (4) group members conduct questions and answers related to the problems faced and discuss thoroughly; (5) the group leader provides a behavior contract sheet, to be disciplined for the next week; (6) the group leader observes group members in each activity.

Fourth, the closing stage. This stage includes (1) the group leader explains if the counseling activity will end according to the time agreement at the beginning of the ac-

tivity; (2) group members reflect on the activities in today's counseling; (4) the group leader closes the counseling session with prayer and greetings.

### 3) Observation

From the results of the observations made, it can be concluded that the participation of students in the group counseling atmosphere is quite enthusiastic, and familiar, they are starting to realize that undisciplined behavior in

school is bad behavior, and the activities run smoothly but some students look embarrassed to be open in sharing personal experiences in front of others, then there are still students who violate the behavior contract sheet during the specified time as a form of commitment to discipline so that improvements need to be made in the form of follow-up in cycle I. The following is a table of cases of learner tardiness after being given counseling in cycle 1:

**Table 1.** Documentation of cycle 1 tardiness records after applying the behavior contract within 1 week

Counselee	Delay rate Post cycle 1: In 1 week
DT	2 times late
RV	3 times late
YL	2 times late
BS	2 times late

It can be seen in the table above that students still experience delays even though counseling has been carried out in cycle 1 by filling out the distributed behavior contract sheets.

### 4) Reflection

Based on the results of observations that have been carried out when implementing counseling in reducing the lateness of students to come to school, it can be concluded that there are several points as material for reflection for cycle 2, namely as follows (1) Learners began to be quite enthusiastic and active when participating in various activities in group counseling; (2) Learners still seem embarrassed to be open and when sharing personal experiences or conveying problems faced in front of others; (3) Learners have not been able to carry out the behavior contract sheet that has been agreed upon when carrying out previous counseling, so there are still undisciplined students when coming to school; (4) It is difficult to adjust the time in carrying out group counseling due to the busy activities of students and school activities, so they must coordinate with counselors, school counselors and subject teachers if they want to carry out counseling.

From the results in cycle I, it is necessary to make improvements, namely conducting counseling in cycle II to make improvements and maximize group counseling using this behavior contract technique. Researchers conduct follow-up as a form of improvement, namely by improving relationships (rapport) with students, asking students to commit to behavior contracts/behavior contracts that have been filled in and agreed upon previously and related to the implementation of counseling, it is necessary to ask the school counselor for help to allow using the teacher's subject hours.

### b. Research Results in Cycle II

#### 1) Planning

In cycle II, the planning is the same as in the previous cycle, including determining the counseling schedule, designing the RPL, and determining the techniques and services for implementing counseling.

#### 2) Action

In research in the implementation stage, the behavior contract technique with group counseling is used by researchers. The following are the stages at this second meeting:

First, the initial stage. This stage includes (1) greeting and warmly welcoming group members; (2) asking one of the group members to lead the prayer; and (3) asking about the news of the group members.

Second, is the transition stage. This stage includes (1) doing ice breaking; (2) the group leader explaining the reason for group counseling; (3) the group leader explaining the principles of the group counseling; and (4) the group asking about readiness to proceed to the next stage.

Third, the activity stage. This stage includes (1) the group leader choosing and determining the problem that will be discussed first; (2) group members tell stories related to what problems they are currently facing; (3) the group leader invites a question and answer session to each member regarding what he is facing; (4) group members conduct questions and answers related to the problems faced and discuss thoroughly; (5) group members commit by filling out the behavior contract sheet again and agreeing on the date; (6) the group leader observes each group member's activities.

Fourth, the closing stage. This stage includes (1) the group leader asks how the members feel when participating in this counseling activity; (2) the group leader informs if the counseling ends soon according to the time

agreement at the beginning of the activity; (3) group members reflect on the activities that have been carried out; (4) the group leader closes the counseling session with greetings and prayers.

### 3) Observation

From the results of observations in cycle II during group counseling activities, it appears to run smoothly and students feel enthusiastic, comfortable, and happy to take part in this counseling activity, and are more open when carrying out the counseling process than in cycle 1 yesterday. After carrying out group counseling activities,

researchers made observations of the reduction of undisciplined behavior of students based on documentation in the form of students' tardiness records and researchers also asked about the development of students to school counselors. The number of undisciplined behavior in cycle II is not as much as in cycle I where students are still late even though a behavior contract has been applied for the next week and after counseling in cycle II and the previously agreed behavior contract is applied for the next week, it can be seen from the documentation of the tardiness record, there are no students who are late. The following is a comparison table between cycles I and II:

**Table 2. Results of Comparison of Post-Action Delay Data Cycle 1 and Cycle II**

Counselee	Comparison of late school arrival cases	
	Post-Action Cycle I	Post-Action Cycle II
DT	2 times late	Not late
RV	3 times late	Not late
YL	2 times late	Not late
BS	2 times late	Not late
Total	9 times late	-

The following table presents a table related to the significant differences between before being treated (pre-cycle), cycle 1 and cycle 2 related to student tardiness data obtained from documentation of student tardiness records:

**Table 3. Comparison of Pre-Cycle, Cycle I and Cycle II**

Counselee	Comparison		
	Pre-cycle (data 1 minggu sebelum dilakukan siklus 1)	Cycle I	Cycle II
DT	3 time	2 time	-
RV	4 time	3 time	-
YL	3 time	2 time	-
BS	3 time	2 time	-
Total	13 time	9 time	0

### 4) Reflection

The results of the observations made by the author in implementing group counseling with behavior contract techniques at SMA Negeri 18 Surabaya showed that (1) Counseling activities ran smoothly and the counselees felt comfortable and happy; (2) The atmosphere was more open and familiar between group members; (3) The number of reductions and decreases in late behavior showed from 9x late to not at all late within one week based on the late case notebook and from the results of follow-up with the school counselor.

## 3.2. Discussion

Improving Disciplinary Behavior of High School Students through Behavior Contract Technique Counseling is an effort to change the behavior of undisciplined students through a counseling approach that focuses on behavioral agreements or behavior contracts. This technique is one of the effective methods in counseling based on behavioristic

theory, where behavior change is achieved through positive reinforcement and setting consequences. Through this approach, students are not only given an understanding of the rules, but are also directly involved in the process of behavior improvement. This gives students a sense of responsibility and the opportunity to learn to manage their own behavior. The application of behavior contract technique counseling in improving the disciplinary behavior of high school students can be an effective method because it involves students in the process of improving behavior actively. With behavior contracts, students get clear directions and opportunities to change their negative behaviors through positive reinforcement. However, the successful application of this technique depends on the student's commitment, consistency of monitoring, and tailoring the intervention to individual needs.

From the results of observations and interviews with school counselors, several learners experience delays in going to school. Documentation of tardiness records shows that there are students who are late 7-13 times a

month. From the results of interviews conducted with the four counselees, it was explained that several factors caused delays such as oversleeping, not being able to manage time well, and not having a private vehicle. Waking up late is usually caused by less useful activities at night such as coffee and playing games until late at night or practicing some extras outside of activities. This group counseling was carried out with two cycles, namely cycle I and cycle II.

This research is a guidance and counseling action research or what is referred to as PTBK which consists of two cycles, namely cycle I and cycle II. In cycle I the implementation of group counseling has not fully run optimally. Judging from the results of evaluation, observation, and documentation of students' tardiness records where there are still students who are late and have not been able to fully commit to the previously agreed behavior contract sheet. So action research was carried out in cycle II. Where there is an increase compared to cycle I. The stages of this research consist of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages.

Cycle I began with the opening stage where students as practitioners greeted, asked for news, and received group members well, asked one of the group members to lead the prayer. At the transition stage, the researcher as group leader explained the reasons for group counseling, the principles of counseling, and the readiness of students to continue at the next stage, namely the activity stage. Then, the core stage begins with the group leader determining the problem to be discussed, namely about going to school late. Group members tell the problems experienced, then given a behavior contract sheet to fill in so that students as a form of commitment not to be late for school, the behavior contract is agreed to be implemented for the next week, but in reality, from the results of observations and documentation of tardiness records, it appears that there are still students who are late at school.

Then from the results of evaluation and reflection carried out in group counseling, students look quite enthusiastic and active in following stage by stage of group counseling even though they still look embarrassed to be open in various personal experiences or convey the problems faced in front of others. Another thing that becomes an evaluation is related to the implementation of counseling which must adjust the time with students due to the busy activities at school, then researchers must also really coordinate and ask permission related to counseling hours to school counselors and subject teachers. From the results of reflection and evaluation in the previous cycle, it was felt that it was not optimal in several ways, therefore it was necessary to conduct research in the next cycle, namely cycle II so that the results obtained from counseling were more optimal.

In cycle II, it was not much different from cycle I where the researcher agreed on a counseling schedule with students and coordinated with school counselors and subject teachers regarding the implementation hours. At the initial stage, the researcher opened with greetings, prayed before starting the activity, asked for news, and started with a neutral topic. In the transitional stage, ice-breaking was done so that students felt less awkward and more open (more interactive) because students felt more comfortable and involved from the start. Continued, the group leader explained the reasons why group counseling was held again at this second meeting, explained the principles of counseling, and the readiness of students to continue at the next stage of counseling, namely activities.

At this stage of the activity, the counselor asks the counselee to explore the problems of group members more deeply in turn, then conducts questions and answers and discusses together related the problems experienced and discusses thoroughly, the researcher asks group members to be truly committed to the behavior contract sheet/behavior contract that will be filled in and agreed upon (valid) for the next week to see the development of students. Learners agree and are truly committed to the behavior contract sheet that they will fill in and agree on, and promise to take it seriously so that they do not just underestimate and violate it as in the implementation of previous counseling in cycle I. Then at the closing stage, the researcher asked about the feelings about participating in group counseling at this meeting, the researcher invited one of the counselees to reflect on the activities that had been carried out and led the prayer. At the end of the counseling session, the researcher gave appreciation because the learners followed the counseling activities well from start to finish then the researcher closed with greetings.

From the results of group counseling that has been carried out in cycle II, it can be seen that there is progress from students, seen from the results of observations made that students are more open than in the previous meeting. Learners show a strong commitment to the behavior contract that has been agreed upon during group counseling at the second meeting. This can be seen from the absence of learners who are late for one week after the implementation of counseling, by the effective date of the predetermined behavior contract, and is reinforced by the documentation of learners' tardiness records.

#### 4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Research on improving the disciplinary behavior of high school students through behavior contract technique counseling has several important implications and contributions both in the world of education and psychology. The following is an explanation of the implications and contributions, namely providing a practical and measura-

ble approach to improving students' disciplinary behavior through counseling interventions. The behavior contract method not only strengthens counseling theory, but also offers real solutions that can be implemented in schools.

## 5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Research on improving the disciplinary behavior of high school students through behavior contract technique counseling certainly has several limitations that need to be considered so that the results can be evaluated critically, the limitations are in measuring sustainable changes where behavior contract techniques often focus on strengthening behavior within a certain period. However, without long-term follow-up, it is difficult to know whether students' disciplinary behavior remains after the intervention is completed or whether students return to their old behavior.

The following are some research recommendations that can be given based on research on improving the disciplinary behavior of high school students through behavior contract technique counseling. The main recommendation is to extend the duration of the study to observe the long-term impact of the behavior contract technique on students' disciplinary behavior. Further research can monitor whether changes in disciplinary behavior persist after the intervention is completed, and whether the technique is effective over a longer period of time (e.g., one semester or one year).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The results of counseling with the behavior contract technique overall show a significant decrease in the undisciplined behavior of seventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 18 Surabaya, so it can be concluded that the behavior contract technique is effectively used in reducing the number of tardiness in coming to school. Behavior Contract technique is proven to be effective in reducing the number of tardiness in coming to school. It is based on the concept of behavior modification, where the student and the school (e.g. teacher or counselor) make a written agreement that contains the student's responsibilities, rewards if targets are achieved, as well as consequences if they fail to comply.

Behavior Contracts can be used as one of the effective and practical methods in reducing negative behaviors, such as tardiness to school, through an approach that involves accountability, positive reinforcement, and cooperation between students, schools, and families. Some of the reasons why this technique is effective include (1) Increased Awareness and Accountability: Contractual agreements that involve students directly increase their awareness of their responsibilities. By clearly knowing what is expected and the rewards, students become more motivated to comply with the rules; (2) Structure and Regu-

larity: The contract provides a clear structure of expected behaviors, and gives students better guidance in managing their time; (3) Positive Reinforcement: The reward system promised in the contract motivates for students to arrive on time; (4) Collaboration and Support: Involving parents, teachers, or counselors in this process adds external support that can encourage students to behave better.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The authors declare that each author contributed fully to the data collection, data analysis, and reporting processes in this study.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

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

## ETHICAL APPROVAL STATEMENT

The author has approved the article to be published in the International Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy (IJCP) by following the Publication Ethics and Journal Policies.

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