



BTS Peer Counseling Based on Banten Cultural Values: Developing Peer Counselors' Interpersonal Communication Competence

Peni Ramanda^{1*}, Paiman², Livna Alfiyanah³, Imalatul Khairat⁴, Siti Sa'diah⁵, Norazani Ahmad⁶

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin, Banten, Indonesia

⁵ Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, United Kingdom

⁶ Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Perak, Malaysia

¹peni.ramanda@uinbanten.ac.id, ²paiman@uinbanten.ac.id, ³22170063.livna@uinbanten.ac.id,

⁴imalatul.khairat@uinbanten.ac.id, ⁵ssadijah01@qub.ac.uk, ⁶norazani@fpm.upsi.edu.my

*Correspondence

Abstract

Article Information:

Received: 26 July 2026

Revised: 20 September 2026

Accepted: 6 October 2026

Published: 13 October 2026

Keywords:

BTS Peer Counseling, Peer Counselors, Interpersonal Communication, Local Wisdom.

Peer counseling services require peer counselors who have adequate interpersonal communication skills so they can provide effective support to their peers. This study aims to develop and test the effectiveness of the Peer Counseling Model (BTS) as an innovation in peer counseling services based on the local cultural values of Banten to improve the interpersonal communication competence of peer counselors. This study aims to develop and examine the effectiveness of the BTS Peer Counseling Model as an innovation in peer counseling services based on the local cultural values of Banten to improve the interpersonal communication competence of peer counselors. This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) design using the ADDIE model, which consisted of the stages of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation, with 15 peer counselor students who participated in the training using the BTS Peer Counseling module that had been validated by content and media experts. Expert validation shows that the module has an excellent level of eligibility, with an average score of 86.25 for the content and 85 for the media aspect. The Wilcoxon test showed a significant increase in the peer counselors' interpersonal communication competence after the training, with a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05) and a matched-pairs rank-biserial correlation of $r_{rb} = 0.88$, indicating a large effect. These findings show that the BTS Peer Counseling Model is feasible, valid, and effective in improving the interpersonal communication competence of peer counselors, while offering new contributions through the integration of Banten's local wisdom into the development of peer counseling models in Islamic universities.

How to Cite this Article

Ramanda, P., Paiman, P., Alfiyanah, L., Khairat, I., Sa'diah, S., & Ahmad, N. (2026). BTS Peer Counseling Based on Banten Cultural Values: Developing Peer Counselors' Interpersonal Communication Competence. *Al-Musyrif: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 9(2), 315-331. <https://doi.org/10.38073/almusyrif.v9i2.5714>

INTRODUCTION

Late adolescence is a critical developmental phase in which university students face various academic and non-academic challenges such as academic stress, anxiety, burnout, time-management difficulties, identity crises, and quarter-life crises that heighten their psychological vulnerability in higher education (Byrom, 2018; Osborn et al., 2022; Richard et al., 2022). These challenges are not confined to any single context; they represent a global concern that is equally pressing within Indonesian higher education, where students often face the added pressure of academic-religious dual expectations, socioeconomic constraints, and limited access to professional psychological support, particularly outside major urban centers.

As a concrete implementation, the Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten (FTK UIN SMH Banten) established the Unit Pelayanan Bimbingan dan Konseling (UPBK) on 20 September 2023, supported by BKPI and PIAUD lecturers, to strengthen institutional guidance capacity, support the implementation of the tridharma of higher education, and structurally implement peer counseling to foster a supportive and inclusive campus environment in the face of modern psychological challenges (Osborn et al., 2022). However, the limited number of professional counselors relative to FTK's large student population prevents UPBK's counseling services from reaching all students optimally, leaving a significant proportion of students without timely access to psychosocial support. This service gap creates the need for a supporting strategy that can extend UPBK's reach without altering its core function. Peer counselors from FTK students serve this role as a complementary, not substitutive, resource: they act as key agents of psychological support and builders of social connectedness, helping to bridge the gap between the demand for psychosocial services and the limited capacity of professional counselors (Topping, 2022).

Peer counselors are not clinical or professional counselors. Rather, they are students trained in peer counseling who serve as early support agents: they help detect emerging psychological and academic or non-academic difficulties among fellow students, provide initial listening and basic emotional support, and refer cases to professional counselors when the complexity of a problem exceeds the scope of their training. Operating as extensions of professional counselors under their supervision, peer counselors help expand service reach and accelerate responses to emerging psychological problems on campus (Jordan, 2022; Topping, 2022). Students also tend to feel more comfortable and open when discussing sensitive issues with their peers than with counselors or lecturers, making peer counselors a strategic complement rather than a substitute for optimizing UPBK services amid the shortage of professional counselors and the complexity of students' problems.

This condition became the basis for developing the Peer Counseling Model (BTS), which is a peer counseling model designed to strengthen the skills of peer counselors in building effective interpersonal relationships. BTS integrates basic counseling skills, such

as initiating verbal and nonverbal interactions, assertive communication, self-disclosure, active listening, empathy, and conflict management, with training in interpersonal communication competence (Chen et al., 2025; Gustatalantu & Rusmawati, 2022). Unlike peer counseling approaches that place counseling skills training as the main component, BTS specifically integrates Banten cultural values into the process of developing peer counselors' communication skills. This model was developed through research and development (R&D) using the ADDIE stages.

Several studies have developed counseling services that integrate local wisdom into guidance and counseling practices. A study titled 'Cognitive Behavioral Counseling Model Based on Local Wisdom at Sumatera Island' showed the development of a cognitive-behavioral counseling model adapted to local wisdom in the Sumatra region (Sari, 2018). The study indicated that local cultural values can be integrated into the counseling model to improve the service's relevance to the client's cultural context. Another study titled 'The Effects of Local Wisdom-Based Group Counseling using Macapat Sinom on High School Students: Cultural Pride in Counseling Implementation' incorporated cultural values through the Macapat Sinom songs in group counseling for high school students, making cultural pride a part of the counseling service implementation. Both studies show that local wisdom has been used in the development and implementation of counseling services, but their focus is different from the BTS model. Local wisdom-based research in Sumatra focuses on the Cognitive Behavioral Counseling model, while the Macapat Sinom study focuses on group counseling for high school students. Meanwhile, BTS was specifically developed as a peer counseling model for university students by integrating Banten cultural values into peer counselors' interpersonal communication skills. Thus, this study expands research on culturally based counseling by positioning local culture not just as a service context, but as the foundation for developing interpersonal communication skills in peer counseling.

Based on this mapping, BTS holds a different position in three aspects. First, this model specifically focuses on peer counselors in universities, rather than on group counseling or culture-based professional counseling. Second, culture is not just treated as a background or implementation context, but is put into practice in peer counselor communication through the use of polite local language and expressions, respect for age relationships, non-confrontational communication, and an orientation toward social harmony. Third, the model's development is aimed at interpersonal communication competence of peer counselors as a measurable outcome. So, the main contribution of BTS lies in integrating counseling skill training, interpersonal communication competence, and the local cultural values of Banten into one peer counseling service framework.

The context of UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten also provides an important foundation for integrating Islamic values into BTS. Within the framework of Islamic Guidance and Counseling, helping relationships are guided not only by

communication effectiveness but also by building relationships based on manners, respect for individual dignity, brotherhood, and cooperation. These values intersect with cultural practices used in BTS, particularly politeness in speech, respect for others, care for fellow people, and efforts to maintain harmonious relationships. Studies on Banten's cultural traditions also show that certain social practices can reflect values of brotherhood, togetherness, gratitude, and social care, which align with Islamic teachings. Thus, Banten's cultural values in BTS are not positioned as a replacement for Islamic foundations, but as a cultural context that serves as a medium for operationalizing Islamic values in the communication behavior of peer counselors. This perspective sees BTS as a peer counseling model that combines interpersonal communication skills, Banten's local wisdom, and the ethical principles of Islamic Guidance and Counseling.

Empirical studies on peer counseling within Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions remain limited. More specifically, the integration of local cultural values such as Banten's *babasan* and politeness norms into peer counselor training models has not been widely examined in existing literature, as previous research has largely focused on training based on conventional methods without comprehensively incorporating ethnic or local wisdom dimensions. Therefore, this study aims to develop, validate, and examine the preliminary effectiveness of the BTS Peer Counseling Model in strengthening culturally grounded guidance and counseling services in higher education. It is expected that this model can be replicated across various institutions, serve as a reference for the development of local-values-based peer counseling programs, and contribute to scholarly discourse on peer counseling that is inclusive, multicultural, and oriented toward humanistic and cultural values.

The strength of peer counseling rests on three pillars: the belief that each individual has an intrinsic capacity to solve their own problems when provided with a safe and empathic space; the role of significant others, whereby close relationships with peer counselors reduce psychological barriers and encourage openness; and a relaxed, flexible, and non-formal atmosphere that enables more authentic and meaningful exchanges of experience (Jordan, 2022; Topping, 2022). These pillars are upheld through structured training that equips peer counselors with the principles of effective communication, empathy, and helping ethics, while keeping them under the supervision of professional counselors to ensure that services meet safety and ethical standards (Bestari et al., 2024; Nuha et al., 2024).

Peer counseling training can be one of the preventive efforts to help students deal with various problems. This is based on the tendency of students to be more open in sharing experiences or expressing issues with their peers. Peer counselors are expected to act as facilitators in helping to recognize and identify the problems experienced by their peers, so that these issues can be followed up through appropriate services, including getting help from professionals if needed (Fuadi & Dewantara, 2021).

Guidance and counseling services need to be developed by taking into account the

social and cultural context surrounding students' lives. A counseling approach that doesn't consider local cultural characteristics may end up being less responsive to individuals' needs and experiences. Therefore, integrating local cultural values into counseling services is important to create services that are more contextual and suitable for students' characteristics (Almasi et al., 2025).

The integration of Banten local values into BTS Peer Counseling is designed to enhance both the contextual relevance and social acceptance of the service, positioning it as a culturally sensitive counseling intervention that encourages student engagement in a natural, non-discriminating atmosphere (Rahmi et al., 2024). This contextualization extends the broader function of peer counseling noted in higher education research, which has been associated with reduced stigma, increased help-seeking, and a narrower gap between counselors' and students' backgrounds. Within this framework, BTS Peer Counseling is distinguished by its attention to local nuances, religious values, and indirect communication patterns characteristic of Banten traditions, alongside its emphasis on respect for age hierarchy even within peer relationships.

Interpersonal competence is the fundamental basis for effective communication in counseling because it encompasses the ability to behave appropriately, communicate verbally and nonverbally, and build and maintain constructive relationships with others, which in peer counseling is essential for fostering client comfort, respect, openness, understanding, and active participation (Chen et al., 2025; Devito, 2016; Nuha et al., 2024). For peer counselors, this competence is essential for managing interaction dynamics so that the counseling process remains humanistic and adaptive.

This study focuses on five dimensions of interpersonal communication competence proposed by Bienvenu (1971): an adequate self-concept, the ability to be a good listener, the skill of expressing one's thoughts clearly, the ability to manage emotions, and the willingness to disclose oneself honestly and freely. These dimensions closely align with Buhrmester et al.'s (1988) five domains of interpersonal competence in peer relationships: initiating relationships, self-disclosure, asserting displeasure with others' actions, providing emotional support, and managing interpersonal conflicts, reinforcing the theoretical relevance of Bienvenu's framework for measuring peer counselors' interpersonal competence in this study.

In peer counseling specifically, interpersonal communication shapes counselors' and counselees' identity and personality through reflection and feedback during the counseling interaction, influencing aspects of psychological well-being such as self-confidence, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction (Chairunnisa et al., 2024). Its core aims align with the five dimensions measured in this study: self-concept, listening, expression, emotional management, and self-disclosure, reflecting the broader goals of interpersonal communication: to be understood, to understand others, to be accepted, and to get something done (Afrilia & Arifina, 2020).

METHOD

This study uses a research and development (R&D) design referring to the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The R&D design is used to develop and conduct an initial evaluation of the Peer Counseling Model (BTS) that is relevant to the needs of peer counselors, feasible to implement, and aimed at strengthening the interpersonal communication skills of peer counselors. The five ADDIE stages are carried out sequentially and iteratively, allowing for improvements based on findings at each stage. The Analysis stage focuses on identifying needs and reviewing the literature; the Design stage includes developing the model framework, integrating Banten's cultural values, and planning the evaluation and instruments; the Development stage involves preparing training materials and expert validation; the Implementation stage is carried out through trials with 15 peer counselors from UPBK FTK UIN Banten; meanwhile, the Evaluation stage covers the assessment of implementation and analysis of initial changes in interpersonal communication competence by comparing scores before and after training. The overall flow of the BTS Model development is shown in Figure 1, while a summary of activities, data sources, instruments, and outputs at each ADDIE stage is presented in Table 1.

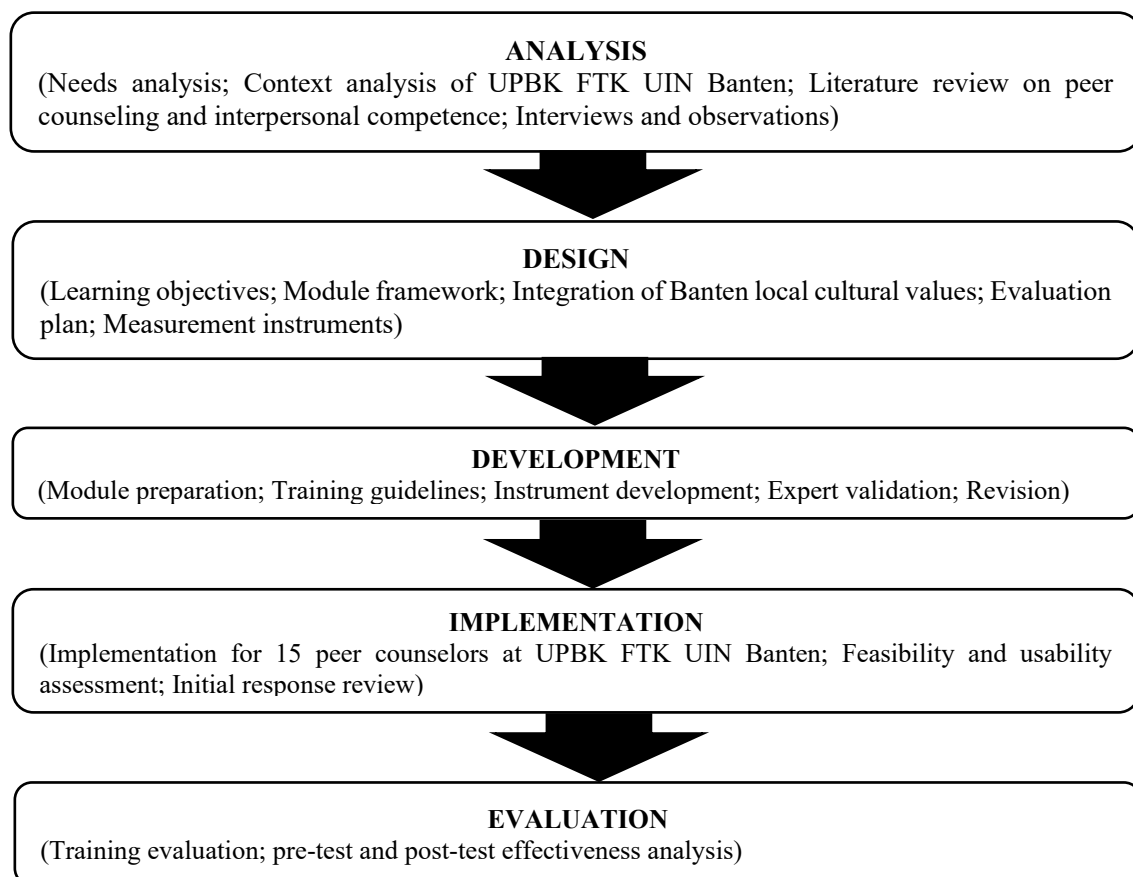


Figure 1. ADDIE Flowchart

Table 1. Development Procedure

Research Method Stage	Activities	Data Sources	Instruments	Output
Analysis (needs and problem analysis)	Identifying counseling service needs, counselor shortages, and peer counselor training needs.	UPBK documents, peer counselors, lecturers, service managers.	Needs assessment sheet/interview guide.	Needs assessment of BTS Peer Counseling peer counselors at UPBK FTK UIN SMH Banten
Design (designing solutions or models)	Drafting the module structure; establishing training method objectives and evaluation; designing supporting materials.	The results of the analysis report; Peer counseling literature; Advice from campus experts/psychologists.	Training Plan Document; Blueprints of modules and syllabus; Pre-test and post-test documents.	Design of the BTS Peer Counseling training module
Development (developing the product prototype)	Producing complete module materials; Developing training packages; validating content with experts; Revisions based on feedback.	Draft module design; Expert input.	Expert validation form; Prototype Module.	BTS Peer Counseling training module ready to be implemented
Implementation (applying the product in a real context)	Organizing BTS Peer Counseling training; Pre-test and post-test data collection.	Peer counsellors; Fasilitator/mentor.	Attendance lists and activity logs; Format of participant practice reports/portfolios; The observation form uses rubrics.	Implementation of the BTS Peer Counseling training
Evaluation (assessing effectiveness and making improvements)	Assess the effectiveness of training; Analysis of competency changes; Evaluate the satisfaction of participants and facilitators.	Pre-test/post-test results, observation rubric, case portfolio; Participant satisfaction questionnaire and follow-up interview	Statistical analysis; Evaluation forms and follow-up interviews.	Improvement of the interpersonal communication competence of BTS Peer Counseling peer counselors

The BTS Peer Counseling training module was validated by three experts: two content experts and one media expert. The experts involved were Dr. Randi Saputra, M.Pd., Kons. (Lecturer in Guidance and Counseling, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Pontianak), Vasco Delano, M.Pd., Kons. (Head of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program, UNMA Banten), and Dr. H. Eko Wahyu Wibowo, M.Pd. (Vice Dean, Faculty of Science, UIN SMH Banten) as the media expert. Selection criteria for the experts included: a minimum of a Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling or a related field, practical experience in campus counseling services or training module development, and prior involvement in instrument validation or instructional material development. The content experts evaluated the module's content validity, alignment with training objectives, and indicators for peer counseling practice skills; the media expert evaluated

instructional design, layout, and accessibility. The validated BTS Peer Counseling module was subsequently implemented through a Peer Counseling training program. Table 2 describes the integration of Banten local cultural values into the BTS Peer Counseling training, which has been validated by experts. The implementation phase involved 15 peer counselors from the UPBK FTK UIN SMH Banten, who were selected using a self-selection sampling technique because they had previously registered and successfully passed the selection process for peer counselors at UPBK FTK UIN SMH Banten. All participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, and their participation was voluntary.

Table 2. Structure of BTS Peer Counseling Training

Session	Topic	Target Skill	Banten Local Wisdom Integration	Training Activity
1	Introduction to BTS Peer Counseling	Understanding the role, purpose, and boundaries of peer counselors	Values of togetherness, social responsibility, and care	Discussion, material explanation, and reflection
2	Active listening	Listening verbally and nonverbally with empathy	Polite language and <i>babasan</i> in responding to others	Role-play, simulation, and feedback
3	Empathy and interpersonal communication	Understanding the counselee's feelings and responding appropriately	Respectful, gentle, and appreciative attitudes toward others	Case study, group discussion, and response practice
4	Managing emotions and conflict	Controlling emotions and responding to problems wisely	Deliberation, peaceful attitudes, and social harmony	Case discussion and problem-solving practice
5	Applying <i>babasan</i> and training evaluation	Using polite and context-appropriate expressions, and reflecting on skill development	<i>Babasan</i> as a form of politeness, respect, and communication harmony	Dialogue practice, demonstration, evaluation, and final reflection

Students' interpersonal communication competence was measured using a student interpersonal communication scale. The interpersonal communication instrument used in this study was based on the Interpersonal Communication Inventory (ICI) developed by Bienvenu (1971). The ICI employed in this research had been translated and validated by Afif Suaidi, M. Hum., and consisted of 40 statements. The reliability test showed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.890. In addition, the validity test indicated that all items were valid, confirming that the instrument was suitable for use and capable of producing consistent measurements across all 40 items. The instrument used to assess expert validation of the BTS Peer Counseling module is based on the indicators presented in Table 3. It is designed to evaluate the relevance of the module's content, instructional clarity, feasibility, and overall suitability for implementation in peer counseling training.

The data were processed using quantitative descriptive analysis to determine the feasibility of the module based on validation conducted by media experts and material experts. A percentage formula was used to assess this feasibility, and the obtained scores were then converted into a table to facilitate the interpretation of the research findings. The converted scores were subsequently categorized into four qualitative levels, which

indicate the feasibility of the developed module. The range of converted scores and the corresponding qualitative criteria were determined based on Table 4.

Table 3. Expert Validation Instrument for Content and Media

Aspect	Indicator
Content Feasibility	Alignment of the material with the body of knowledge in guidance and counseling
	Accuracy of the material
	Completeness of the material
Presentation	Presentation technique
	Service presentation
	Completeness of presentation
Language	Language appropriateness
	Language clarity
Design	Module appearance
	Attractiveness characteristics of the module
	Layout
	Readability

Table 4. Feasibility Percentage

Converted Score	Qualification	Description
76–100	Very Good	Highly Feasible
51–75	Good	Feasible
26–50	Fair	Less Feasible
0–25	Poor	Not Feasible

The effectiveness of the training model in improving students' communication skills was analyzed using the non-parametric Wilcoxon test with the aid of SPSS 20. Effect size was calculated using Cohen's *d* by comparing the mean pretest and posttest scores and dividing the difference by the standard deviation, in order to determine the magnitude of the intervention effect. The criteria for interpersonal communication competence are as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Criteria for Interpersonal Communication Competence

Score	Qualification
81–120	High
41–80	Moderate
0–40	Low

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The expert validation results indicate that the BTS Peer Counseling training module meets the established feasibility criteria, as reflected in the validation scores presented in Table 6. These results suggest that the module is appropriate in terms of content and design, supporting its readiness for use in enhancing the interpersonal communication competence of prospective peer counselor students. These scores reflect expert assessment across the four aspects outlined in Table 3: content feasibility,

presentation, language appropriateness, and design quality, all of which received favorable ratings from the respective experts.

Table 6. Summary of Experts Validation Scores

Validator	Validator Type	Total Score	Converted Score	Qualification	Description
CE-1	Content Expert 1	34	85	Very Good	Highly Feasible
CE-2	Content Expert 2	35	87.5	Very Good	Highly Feasible
ME-1	Media Expert	17	85	Very Good	Highly Feasible

The effectiveness of the BTS Peer Counseling training module was measured by comparing the pre-test and post-test results completed by 15 student participants in the training. It is important to note that both the pre-test ($M = 82.4$) and post-test ($M = 87.6$) scores fall within the High category, as shown in Table 7. The observed improvement therefore reflects a refinement of an already high level of interpersonal communication competence, rather than a shift from a low to a high category.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Interpersonal Communication Competence

Measurement	N	Mean	Category	SD	Min	Max	Mean Gain
Pre-test	15	82.4	High	9.63	65	91	
Post-test	15	87.6	High	8.51	67	96	5.2

Table 8. Summary of Wilcoxon Test Results

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Negatif Rank	0	.00	.00
Positive Ranks	15	8.00	120.00
Ties	0		
Sig	0,001		

The results show a significance value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$) with an effect size of Rank-Biserial Correlation $r_{rb} = 0.88$, indicating a statistically significant positive within-group change in the interpersonal communication competence of peer counselors following the BTS Peer Counseling training. As this study did not employ a control group, this finding should be interpreted as a within-group change rather than as direct evidence of a causal effect of the intervention, as shown in Table 8.

The BTS Peer Counseling Model serves as a complementary guidance and counseling service to support student well-being and quality improvement in higher education, in line with the mandate of Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, Dan Teknologi RI Nomor 39 Tahun 2025. The model addresses not only the technical needs of guidance and counseling services at UPBK FTK UIN SMH Banten but also the sociocultural and psychological characteristics of UIN SMH Banten students, through its integration of Banten cultural elements such as age hierarchy and *babasan*. Nugroho (2020) argues that applying local wisdom values in peer counseling is strategic for fostering emotional closeness, trust, and reduced stigma associated with seeking

psychological help among adolescents, a perspective that aligns with the design rationale of BTS Peer Counseling.

In addition, the use of local wisdom helps create healthier interpersonal relationships between counselors and counselees and can prevent conflict. Similar findings by Valencya et al. (2025) indicate that incorporating local wisdom such as *Hasthalaku* can enhance social harmony, deepen understanding of diversity, and reduce conflict in multicultural communities. This further underscores the urgency of cultural adaptation as developed in the BTS Peer Counseling Model. The feasibility and effectiveness of the BTS Peer Counseling Model are supported by a systemic training module design that emphasizes the provision of individual and group guidance and counseling, involves competent resource persons, and integrates Banten local wisdom values. The high validation scores (content and media aspects above 85) and statistically significant Wilcoxon test results ($p < 0.05$) demonstrate not only statistical effectiveness but also meaningful practical impact on students. Susetyo et al. (2024) emphasize that successful peer counselor training must go beyond knowledge transfer by strengthening attitudes (socially rooted values), communication skills, and the internalization of social ethics during training sessions. Likewise, Pandang et al. (2022) highlight that peer counseling training should be conducted in an atmosphere of understanding and must respond to students' real needs related to problem-solving in communication and the development of socio-emotional skills.

BTS Peer Counseling may contribute to reducing counseling stigma by creating a more familiar and culturally acceptable helping space, while cultivating a culture of mutual care within the peer counselor community at UPBK FTK UIN SMH Banten. The preliminary findings suggest that BTS Peer Counseling is valid and shows promising results in improving interpersonal communication competence. The overall improvement observed through the Wilcoxon test, from a pre-test mean of 82.4 to a post-test mean of 87.6, is discussed below in relation to the five interpersonal communication dimensions described by Bienvenu (1971): an adequate self-concept, the ability to be a good listener, the skill of expressing one's thoughts and ideas clearly, the ability to cope with one's emotions, and the willingness to disclose oneself to others truthfully and freely. As the following discussion draws primarily on theoretical and qualitative reasoning rather than dimension-specific quantitative data, these interpretations should be regarded as illustrative rather than conclusive.

Group counseling simulations in BTS Peer Counseling are key to constructing a positive self-image. Feelings of acceptance and appreciation within the peer group provide a safe space for self-exploration, making peer counselors more willing to be open without fear of being judged negatively by their peers (Azzahrah et al., 2025). The practice of BTS Peer Counseling also reinforces egalitarian relationships, in which positive communication and emotional support in the training group help participants move beyond superior-inferior interaction patterns. This mutually reinforcing communication pattern enables individuals to build a balanced and healthy self-

perception and helps them manage social pressures arising from peer comparison (Tyas et al., 2025).

Moreover, group norms and peer dynamics play an important role in shaping self-identity and in the long-term development of self-concept. Group norms do not merely encourage conformity, but also create space for self-exploration through identity negotiation within the group. Pressures to conform, emotional support, and visible behavioral models in the BTS Peer Counseling training environment together shape self-confidence and form the basis of long-term identity development. Although peer pressure can sometimes restrict originality, the BTS environment allows counselors to understand themselves while refining their interpersonal competence (Conti & Kovács, 2025).

The next aspect, active listening, is cultivated through polite communication strategies, such as the use of *babasan*, which trains counselors to value their peers' perspectives and experiences more deeply. Active listening skills also serve as the foundation for building the mutual trust essential in counseling. Studies by Croft et al. (2022) and other practice-oriented psychological research indicate that active listening, whether verbal or nonverbal, makes clients feel more understood and emotionally supported, which not only improves clients' perceptions of counselor empathy but also enhances the therapeutic bond between counselor and client.

Previous studies indicate that active listening training in peer counselor preparation can enhance participants' self-efficacy, communication skills, and confidence, particularly when the training includes direct practice and adequate supervision. In addition, empathetic and culturally responsive communication has been shown to reduce misunderstandings, strengthen relational safety, and minimize communication barriers in counseling settings (Kercher et al., 2025). Within this framework, *babasan* serves as a linguistic strategy that guides peer counselors to use polite and context-appropriate expressions, respect the counselee's dignity, and create a more non-confrontational interaction. As a result, the use of *babasan* not only softens verbal expression but also supports the development of communication that is empathetic, adaptive, and effective in peer counseling practice.

The BTS Peer Counseling Model has also proven effective in improving the ability to express ideas and emotions clearly in both individual and group counseling through exercises in constructing messages that are structured, clear, and contextually aligned with counselees' needs. Counselors are trained to formulate feedback and suggestions using effective, empathetic language that also preserves local politeness norms through *babasan*. This model has been shown to refine peer counselors' skills in articulating thoughts and feelings in a coherent and contextually appropriate manner. Nuha et al. (2024) report that peer counseling training for university students enhances the quality of self-expression and reduces tendencies toward ambiguous or inhibited communication, resulting in more open and meaningful interactions between counselors and counselees.

An important feature of BTS Peer Counseling is the consistent practice of delivering feedback and suggestions using effective, empathetic language aligned with

local communication etiquette, particularly *babasan*. Nuha et al. (2024) highlight the need for feedback grounded in “compassionate communication,” which is not only logically sound but also sensitive to the social and emotional context of the counselee. By continuously aligning messages with local wisdom values, peer counselors can maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships and increase message acceptance, as demonstrated by effective group counseling communication practices across various cultural contexts (Nuha et al., 2024).

The aspect of self-disclosure, the willingness to open up honestly, is another essential element that distinguishes BTS Peer Counseling from other models. Emphasizing a philosophy of brotherhood and the local wisdom of *babasan*, this model creates warmth, trust, and openness as the basis for a natural exchange of experiences and hopes in counseling (Iversen, 2025). Practicing self-disclosure during training is vital for building mutual intimacy and trust. When counselors selectively share relevant personal experiences, they invite counselees to open up more authentically and feel more valued; such experience-based, non-prescriptive self-disclosure can deepen relational closeness and reduce relational asymmetries, making the counseling relationship feel more equal and familiar.

This study makes both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it enriches the literature on research and development in guidance and counseling by applying the ADDIE model to strengthen students’ interpersonal communication competence through the BTS Peer Counseling model, which integrates Banten local wisdom. The findings also extend peer counseling scholarship by showing that communication competence can be developed not only through skill-based training but also through culturally grounded counseling practices that are more contextual, humanistic, and relevant to students’ needs. Practically, the BTS Peer Counseling model can serve as an alternative training strategy for peer counselors to improve students’ interpersonal communication competence. It also provides a useful reference for higher education institutions in developing peer counseling services that are responsive to both learner needs and local cultural characteristics.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small, and the study did not include a control group; therefore, the findings should be interpreted as within-group changes rather than as strong causal evidence. Second, the study was conducted within a single institutional context, which limits the generalizability of the results. Future research should involve a larger sample and employ a stronger experimental design. It is also recommended to test the BTS Peer Counseling model in different higher education settings to strengthen its external validity. In addition, future studies may examine the model’s effects on other variables, such as self-disclosure, self-confidence, active listening skills, and the overall effectiveness of peer counseling services.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that research uptake among Islamic school counselors in partner schools remains limited at the level of the selected indicators reported. Although participants had been exposed to university-based research activities, only a minority reported clear understanding of recommendations, perceived them as relevant or useful, or attempted to apply them in counseling practice. The central contribution of the study is the identification of an implementation gap between exposure to research and the application of recommendations in Islamic school counseling practice. Research exposure, by itself, is therefore insufficient to demonstrate evidence-informed counseling use.

The pattern involves both structural and psychosocial barriers. Limited time can constrain implementation opportunities, while low confidence, reliance on familiar methods, and reluctance to continue after difficulty may further reduce the likelihood that recommendations become routine. These findings support practical follow-up through clearer implementation guidance, opportunities for small-scale trials, protected time where feasible, feedback, and professional-learning spaces in which counselors can discuss and revise unsuccessful attempts.

The study provides a preliminary, hypothesis-generating basis for future research on growth mindset-oriented professional development, but growth mindset was not measured directly, and no causal or psychological explanation should be inferred from the present data. The tendency to return to previous methods after an unsuccessful attempt is treated only as a behavioral observation that may justify direct investigation of growth mindset, reflective practice, and implementation support in subsequent studies. Future research should test whether these factors help counselors persist, revise strategies, and transform research recommendations into sustainable, contextually appropriate Islamic school counseling practices.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors used Perplexity AI to assist with language editing and improving the readability of the manuscript. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed, revised, and verified by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Peni Ramanda, Paiman, and Imalatul Khairat contributed to the research and manuscript preparation. Livna coordinated the implementation of the training activities. Siti Sadiyah and Norazani contributed to translation, literature searches, and the collection of relevant scientific references. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript and agreed to be accountable for their respective contributions.

FUNDING STATEMENT

This research was supported by a research grant from Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten under Rector's Decree No. 371 of 2025 concerning Research Grant Recipients. The funding supported research preparation, implementation, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The research data supporting the findings of this study may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to participant confidentiality, ethical considerations, and applicable institutional regulations. The research report is also available through the institutional repository of Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, subject to the repository's access policies.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known financial or non-financial competing interests that could have influenced the research, interpretation of findings, or preparation of this manuscript.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, particularly the Institute for Research and Community Service (LP2M) and the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, for their institutional and financial support. This research was supported under Rector's Decree No. 371 of 2025 concerning Research Grant Recipients at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten.

REFERENCES

- Afrilia, A. M., & Arifina, A. S. (2020). *Buku Ajar Komunikasi Interpersonal*. Pustaka Rumah Cinta.
- Almasi, M., Kimangale, S. H., & Kessy, N. (2025). Beyond Eurocentric Models: Rethinking Guidance and Counseling Services in Tanzanian Schools Through an Indigenous Lens. *Al Musyrif: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 8(2), 132–149. <https://doi.org/10.38073/almusyrif.v8i2.2538>
- Azzahrah, H., Rusmana, N., Saripah, I., & Syahril, M. F. (2025). A Humanistic-Based Peer Support Model to Promote Subjective Well-Being in Senior High School Students: Design and Development Study. *Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 7(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.51214/002025071535000>
- Bestari, S. W., Zen, E. F., & Hotifah, Y. (2024). Implementasi Keterampilan Dasar Komunikasi Konselor Sebaya dalam Konseling Online. *Buletin Konseling Inovatif*, 2(1), 8–20. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um059v2i12022p8-20>

- Biennu, M. J. (1971). An Interpersonal Communication Inventory. *Journal of Communication*, 21(4), 381–388. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1971.tb02937.x>
- Buhrmester, D., Furman, W., Wittenberg, M. T., & Reis, H. T. (1988). Five Domains of Interpersonal Competence in Peer Relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 55(6), 991–1008. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.55.6.991>
- Byrom, N. (2018). An evaluation of a peer support intervention for student mental health. *Journal of Mental Health*, 27(3), 240–246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2018.1437605>
- Chairunnisa, A., Arum, H. S., & Salamah, P. U. (2024). Pengaruh Hubungan dan Komunikasi Interpersonal Terhadap Aspek Psikologis: Sebuah Systematic Review. *Jurnal Psikologi*, 1(4), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.47134/pjp.v1i4.2717>
- Chen, C., Zhang, Y., Guo, Q., Wang, X., & Chen, S. (2025). Core Competencies for Psychological Counselors: A Scoping Review. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(2), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15020147>
- Conti, M., & Kovács, E. (2025). The Role of Peer Group Norms in Shaping Self-Identity Formation Among Adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies*, 6(7), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.jayps.4350>
- Croft, R. L., Byrd, C. T., & Kelly, E. M. (2022). The influence of active listening on parents' perceptions of clinical empathy in a stuttering assessment: A preliminary study. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 100, 106274. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcomdis.2022.106274>
- Devito, J. A. (2016). *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. Pearson.
- Fuadi, M., & Dewantara, M. I. (2021). Program Pelatihan Peer Counseling sebagai Upaya Layanan Preventif Di Sekolah. *Al Musyrif: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 4(2), 133–141. <https://doi.org/10.25273/counsellia.v6i1.453>
- Gustatalantu, R., & Rusmawati, D. (2022). Hubungan Antara Kompetensi Interpersonal dengan Motivasi Belajar pada Siswa SMP Negeri 1 Baturetno Kabupaten Wonogiri. *Jurnal EMPATI*, 11(1), 26–31. <https://doi.org/10.14710/empati.2022.33357>
- Iversen, C. (2025). Self-disclosures in online crisis counselling: levelling asymmetries while maintaining client-focus. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 15(3), 332–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2023.2236629>
- Jordan, L. M. (2022). Peer Counseling: Method, Metaphor, or Mindset? *Frontiers in Rehabilitation Sciences*, 3, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fresc.2022.822484>
- Kercher, K. A., Heeter, K. N., Dannelley, C., King, J. F., Schaefer, S., & Martinez Kercher, V. M. (2025). Enhancing listening skills among future public health professionals: a pre-post educational intervention study. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1637788>
- Nugroho, I. (2020). Peer counseling berbasis local wisdom solusi problematika pendidikan remaja di era disrupsi. *Counsnesia Indonesian Journal Of Guidance and Counseling*, 1(01), 20–28. <https://doi.org/10.36728/cijgc.v1i01.1173>

- Nuha, Moch. S., Hidayah, N., & Wahyuni, F. (2024). Model Pelatihan Peer-Counseling Pada Mahasiswa: Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis. *G-Couns: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 8(2), 818–840. <https://doi.org/10.31316/gcouns.v8i2.5695>
- Osborn, T. G., Town, R., Ellis, R., Buckman, J. E. J., Saunders, R., & Fonagy, P. (2022). Implementing peer support in higher education: A feasibility study. *SSM - Mental Health*, 2, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmmh.2022.100175>
- Pandang, A., Rivai, M., Fadhilah Umar, N., & Arifyadi, A. (2022). The need analysis for developing peer mentors as peer counseling program among Gen Z. *International Journal of Research in Counseling and Education*, 06, 163–176. <https://doi.org/10.24036/00568za0002>
- Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Tinggi, Sains, Dan Teknologi RI Nomor 39 Tahun 2025 Tentang Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan Tinggi (2025).
- Rahmi, N., Ermalianti, & Heldawati. (2024). Peer Counseling based on Experiential Learning in Higher Education: A Research & Development Study. *Bisma The Journal of Counseling*, 7(2), 186–194. <https://doi.org/10.23887/bisma.v7i2.66930>
- Richard, J., Rebinsky, R., Suresh, R., Kubic, S., Carter, A., Cunningham, J. E. A., Ker, A., Williams, K., & Sorin, M. (2022). Scoping review to evaluate the effects of peer support on the mental health of young adults. *BMJ Open*, 12(8), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-061336>
- Susetyo, Y. F., Supriyadi, A., Setiyawati, D., & Hidayati, N. K. (2024). Development of a training module for adolescent Peer Counsellors based on a systematic literature review. *Psikologia: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Psikologi*, 19(1), 67–74. <https://doi.org/10.32734/psikologia.v19i1.14503>
- Topping, K. J. (2022). Peer Education and Peer Counselling for Health and Well-Being: A Review of Reviews. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(10), 6064. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19106064>
- Tyas, C. A., Setiawan, A., & Widiarto, Chr. A. (2025). The Relationship between Self-Concept and Self-Confidence of Junior High School Students. *QUANTA Journal: Kajian Bimbingan Dan Konseling Dalam Pendidikan*, 9(1), 67–74. <https://doi.org/10.22460/quanta.v9i1.5474>
- Valencya, N., Linsetyowati, N. C. C., Arfianti, Y. P., Zuhriyah, S. A., Musyaffa, A. F., & Khusumadewi, A. (2025). Kearifan Lokal Hasthalaku sebagai Pendekatan Konseling Multibudaya untuk Meningkatkan Harmoni Sosial. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan*, 3(4), 747–757. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.383>