


## TAMING AGGRESSION: COUNSELORS' INSIGHTS ON EFFECTIVE PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 22 Dis 2024 Revised: 4 Jan 2025 Accepted: 20 Jan 2025 Published: 1 Feb 2025</p>	<p>This study employs the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) to examine counselors' perspectives on psycho-educational strategies for managing aggressive behavior. Seven professional counselors participated in the evaluation of various approaches, providing insights into their effectiveness and challenges. Findings indicate a strong consensus on the benefits of social skills training, behavioral modeling, and problem-solving techniques in fostering positive behavioral changes. Counselors observed notable improvements in clients' self-regulation and emotional management, reinforcing the long-term value of these strategies. However, challenges such as implementation barriers, limited resources, and the need for tailored interventions were also identified. Despite these obstacles, psycho-educational approaches are widely regarded as effective for sustained aggression management, with the potential for cultural adaptation to meet diverse client needs. The study underscores the importance of ongoing professional development, enhanced resource allocation, and structured intervention models to optimize client outcomes and increase counselor job satisfaction.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Aggressive behavior, Psychoeducation, Nominal Group Technique, Counselor Perspectives, Behavioral Interventions.</i></p> <p> OPEN ACCESS</p>	

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DOI [10.5281/zenodo.10619388](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10619388)

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior among students has become a growing concern in modern educational settings. This issue not only disrupts the learning environment but also has long-term negative effects on students' psychological and social development, as well as the overall school climate (Sukhodolsky et al., 2016). If left unaddressed, aggressive behavior can lead to more severe consequences, including academic decline, strained peer relationships, and emotional distress. Given the widespread impact of this issue, effective intervention strategies are crucial to fostering a safe and supportive learning atmosphere.

One of the most widely recognized methods for addressing aggressive behavior in students is the psycho-educational approach. This method integrates psychological principles with educational strategies to help students develop self-awareness, regulate emotions, and adopt positive behavioral changes (Lochman et al., 2019). By focusing on both cognitive and emotional aspects of behavior, psycho-educational interventions enable students to recognize the triggers of their aggression, understand its consequences, and implement healthier coping mechanisms.

School counselors play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of psycho-educational approaches. As professionals trained in both counseling and educational psychology, they are uniquely positioned to assess aggressive behaviors, design personalized intervention plans, and provide continuous support to students exhibiting such tendencies (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020). Moreover, counselors consider multiple contextual factors—including family background, peer influence, school environment, and socio-emotional dynamics—to develop tailored strategies that effectively address the root causes of aggression (Domitrovich et al., 2017).

Research has consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of psycho-educational interventions led by school counselors. Studies have shown that these approaches contribute significantly to reducing aggression, improving students' social skills, and enhancing emotional regulation (O'Brennan et al., 2020). Additionally, collaboration among counselors, teachers, and parents has been found to strengthen intervention outcomes, creating a more cohesive and supportive framework for student development (Espelage et al., 2018). When implemented effectively, the psycho-educational approach not only mitigates aggression but also fosters a more positive, inclusive, and emotionally intelligent school culture.

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of psycho educational strategies from the perspective of school counselors, highlighting the challenges, best practices, and long-term benefits of this approach in managing student aggression.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Comprehending Aggressive Behavior

Aggressive behavior is a multifaceted and intricate psychological construct, encompassing deliberate actions intended to inflict physical, emotional, or psychological harm on others. This phenomenon is influenced by a diverse range of factors, including biological, cognitive, social, and environmental elements. Pioneering research by Waltes et al. (2016), Craig and Halton (2009), and Cupaioli et al. (2020) has expanded the understanding of aggression by illustrating how it emerges from a dynamic interaction between neurobiological predispositions, learned behavioral patterns, and external influences. Psychological frameworks such as social learning theory, cognitive-behavioral perspectives, and neurobiological approaches offer valuable insights into the mechanisms underpinning aggressive tendencies. These theories collectively highlight the roles of observational learning, cognitive distortions, emotional regulation deficits, and neurochemical imbalances in shaping aggressive behavior.

The classification of aggression reveals its varied expressions, including reactive and proactive aggression, relational aggression, and digital aggression—each exhibiting distinct psychological and social underpinning. Developmental research underscores the profound impact of early-life experiences on the trajectory of aggressive behaviors. Studies conducted by Vaughan et al. (2023), Arsenio et al. (2009), and Raine et al. (2006) emphasize that childhood exposure to hostile environments, inconsistent parenting, and adverse social

interactions significantly influence aggressive tendencies in later life. Furthermore, adolescence is a crucial period where neurological maturation, combined with shifting social dynamics, can either mitigate or exacerbate aggressive behavior patterns. These findings highlight the necessity of adopting a holistic perspective that considers individual dispositions, family background, and broader societal contexts when analyzing aggression.

Recent scholarly contributions advocate for multifaceted intervention strategies that acknowledge the complexity of aggressive behaviors. Smith et al. (2012), Bradshaw et al. (2012), Sadler (2018), and Shek & Lee (2024) propose an integrated approach involving early identification of at-risk individuals, tailored cognitive-behavioral therapies, social skills training, and emotional regulation strategies. The most effective interventions recognize aggression as a fluid and context-dependent construct, influenced by a combination of neuroplasticity, learned behaviors, and individual psychological factors. By embracing an interdisciplinary perspective, practitioners can design and implement interventions that not only prevent but also rehabilitate aggressive tendencies across various developmental stages, ultimately fostering a more adaptive and prosocial behavioral outlook.

## 2.2 Aggressive Behavior in School Aged Students

Aggression in school-aged children and adolescents is shaped by a complex interplay of psychosocial and environmental determinants, with family dynamics, peer relationships, and educational settings playing crucial roles in its development. Research indicates that low parental attachment, harsh parenting practices, and unsupportive school environments significantly contribute to the emergence of aggressive behaviors (Dou et al., 2015). The home environment, in particular, is a foundational space where children develop emotional responses and coping mechanisms. Exposure to authoritarian parenting styles, domestic conflict, or neglect can foster aggressive tendencies, leading to difficulties in social adaptation.

Peer influences further exacerbate aggressive behaviors, with adolescents experiencing peer rejection, bullying, or negative social pressures exhibiting a higher likelihood of engaging in aggression (Yavuzer et al., 2014). Furthermore, the broader societal context, including exposure to community violence, media portrayals of aggression, and cultural attitudes towards conflict resolution, also plays a pivotal role in shaping a student's behavioral responses (Farrell et al., 2010). Emotional regulation is another significant determinant; students who struggle with impulse control and emotion regulation often display heightened aggression due to frustration intolerance and difficulties in processing social cues (Al Mahsuny & Nastiti, 2024).

Parental guidance and peer interactions are among the most prominent predictors of aggression, reinforcing the bidirectional influence of the home and social environment on student behavior (Osiesi et al., 2023). However, studies suggest that fostering positive teacher-student relationships and promoting a nurturing school climate can serve as effective buffers against aggression (Behrhorst et al., 2020). Teachers who demonstrate empathetic communication, positive reinforcement, and conflict resolution training contribute to a school environment that discourages aggressive tendencies while promoting prosocial behavior and emotional intelligence development. Given these insights, holistic intervention strategies that integrate individual counseling, parental support programs, and school-wide behavioral policies are essential for mitigating aggression and cultivating a conducive learning atmosphere for all students.

## 2.3 The Importance of Counselors' Insights in Addressing Aggressive Behavior

Counselors serve as crucial agents in managing aggressive behavior, bridging the gap between psychological assessments and targeted interventions. Their role extends beyond behavior management to include preventative strategies, individualized support, and skill-building programs aimed at fostering emotional resilience and adaptive coping mechanisms. According to Supriyanto and Saputra (2023), peace counseling is a particularly effective method that empowers counselors to instill a mindset of non-violence and constructive conflict resolution in students, thereby reducing aggression through the promotion of emotional regulation and mindfulness techniques.

A key aspect of a counselor's role is identifying early warning signs of aggression and implementing proactive interventions tailored to each student's needs. Adamu (2019) underscores the significance of teaching coping skills, emotional regulation, and problem-solving techniques as fundamental components of aggression management. By fostering self-awareness and social-emotional intelligence, counselors help students navigate interpersonal conflicts more effectively while mitigating aggressive outbursts.

Moreover, contemporary counseling approaches emphasize evidence-based practices such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), social skills training, and restorative justice practices to address aggression comprehensively. Counselors are not only responsible for de-escalating immediate aggressive incidents but also for designing long-term intervention plans that address the underlying psychological and environmental contributors to aggression. Their work is instrumental in shaping school policies, training educators, and facilitating parental involvement, ultimately fostering a systemic approach to aggression management.

In light of these factors, the evolving role of counselors as advocates of behavioral change highlights their indispensable contribution to creating safer, more harmonious learning environments. By integrating psychological insights with practical interventions, they play a pivotal role in reducing aggression, enhancing student well-being, and promoting positive social interactions. Their expertise in multidimensional intervention planning ensures that aggressive behaviors are managed effectively, laying the foundation for healthier developmental outcomes for students across various educational settings.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a structured approach designed to achieve group consensus on a particular subject. Initially introduced by Delbecq, Van de Ven, and Gustafson (1975), NGT was developed as a participatory method for social planning, including exploratory research, community engagement, interdisciplinary discussions, and proposal assessments. Over time, this technique has been widely adopted in various domains, such as empirical social sciences and educational research (O'Neil & Jackson, 1983; Lomax & McLeman, 1984; Lloyd-Jones et al., 1999; MacPhail, 2001), though it is most commonly applied in health-related studies. The methodology follows a four-step process: independent idea generation in response to a prompt, round-robin idea sharing without discussion, clarification and categorization of similar ideas, and individual voting to establish priorities. For this study, participants engaged in an NGT session to brainstorm and enhance strategies for managing aggressive behavior among students. Initially, each participant independently recorded their ideas, which were compiled into an Excel sheet and projected for visibility. The group then discussed and refined these ideas, merging those with similar themes. To determine priorities, the researcher implemented a five-card rating system, streamlining the evaluation process and reducing errors. Participants ranked their top five ideas using color-coded cards with an assigned scoring system, mitigating challenges linked to complex rating procedures. This method enabled efficient prioritization, ensuring that the most significant and impactful suggestions were identified while minimizing time constraints and potential inaccuracies.

#### **3.2 Selection of Panel Expert**

The study engaged a meticulously chosen group of seven expert counselors, ensuring a diverse range of insights into managing aggressive behavior among school students. The participants comprised seven counselors, each possessing over a decade of professional experience and extensive exposure to cases involving aggressive behavior. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of the subject, purposeful samplings recommended by Palinkas et al. (2015) and were utilized to select individuals with profound expertise in the field. The selection criteria required participants to have a minimum of ten years of relevant experience, a proven track record in conducting counseling sessions for

aggressive behavior cases, and a willingness to participate in a collaborative consensus-building process.

The researcher facilitated a face-to-face Nominal Group Technique (NGT) session in the meeting room of the Penang Head of State Abdullah Fahim Mosque. This structured discussion lasted two hours, providing a platform for experts to brainstorm ideas and solutions based on their collective knowledge. At the session's conclusion, the researcher applied specific calculations within the NGT framework to systematically analyze the data, ensuring that the findings effectively addressed the study's objectives.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

This study examines five key constructs: Comprehension and Application of Psycho-Educational Approaches, Educational Psycho Techniques, Effectiveness of the Psychoeducational Approach, Challenges and Potential Enhancements, and Perceived Long-Term Impact. Each construct consists of five items and is assessed using a three-point Likert scale: 1 (Disagree), 2 (Neutral), and 3 (Agree). Respondents engaged in group discussions about the constructs and corresponding items before individually casting their votes based on their viewpoints. The collected data were then converted into percentages and analyzed systematically.

To prioritize key ideas, the voting results underwent a quantitative ranking process. For an item to be considered valid, its agreement percentage had to exceed 70%, a threshold recognized in the literature as the acceptable range for Nominal Group Technique (NGT) evaluations. This criterion ensures a high level of consensus among participants and enhances the reliability of the measured elements. Items surpassing this threshold were ranked based on their total scores, determining their relative importance within the study framework. This method aligns the findings with expert evaluations, ensuring a structured and systematic assessment of the constructs.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the study following the completion of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) process. Table 1 outlines the constructs and table 2 are constructs and items deliberated by counselors in addressing aggressive behavior within this research.

Table 1: Constructs of Strategies in Controlling Aggressive Behaviors

Constructs	Vo ter 1	Vo ter 2	Vo ter 3	Vo ter 4	Vo ter 5	Vo ter 6	Vo ter 7	Total item score	Perce ntage	Rank Priorit y	Voter Consens us
Understanding and Use of Psycho-Educational Approaches	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
Educational Psycho Techniques	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
Effectiveness of Psychoeducational Approach	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Challenges and Improvements	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
Perception of Long-Term Effectiveness	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable

Figure 1: The Framework of Constructs Strategies in Controlling Aggressive Behaviors

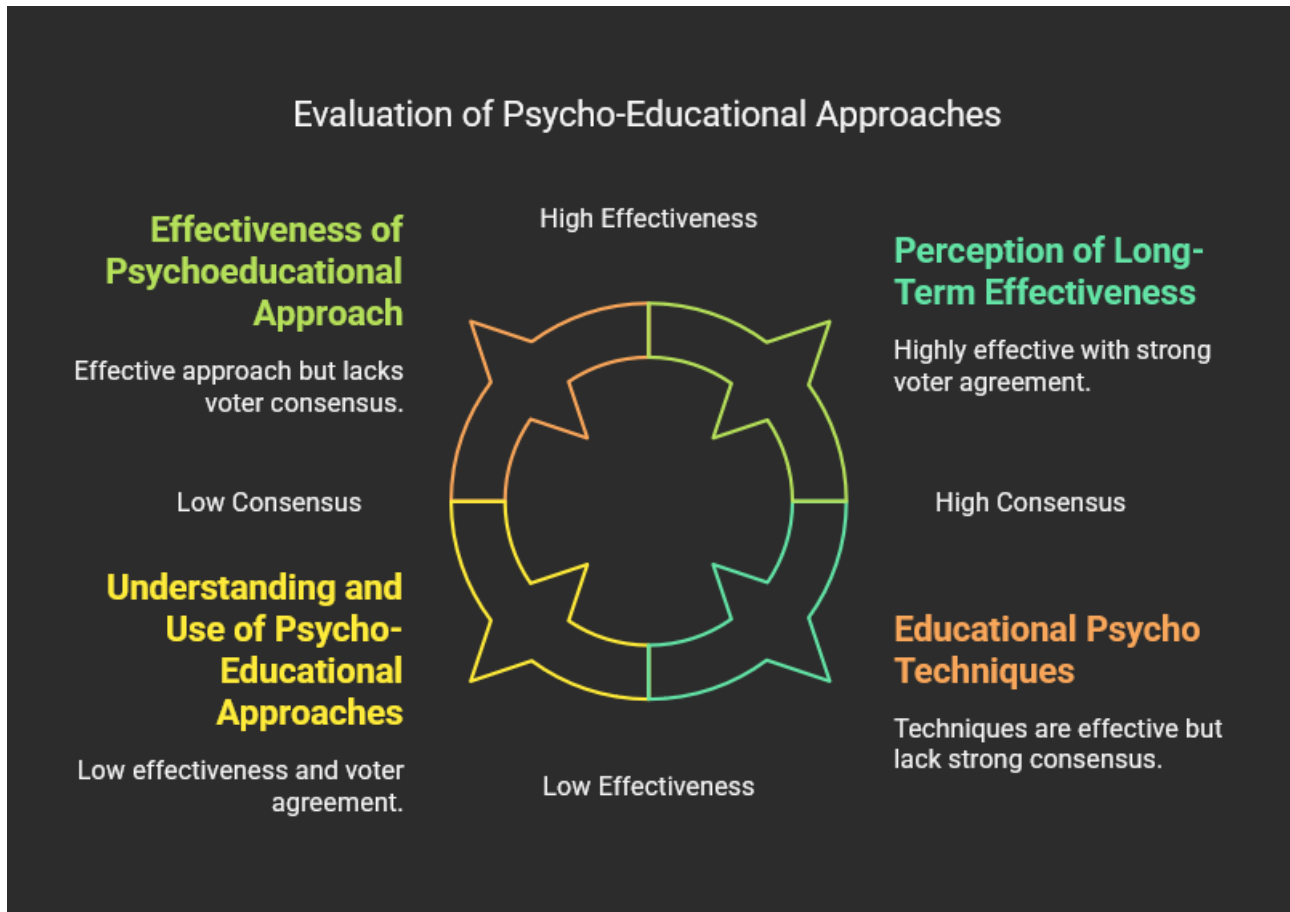


Table 2 Constructs and Items of Strategies in Controlling Aggressive Behaviors

Items / Elements	Voter 1	Voter 2	Voter 3	Voter 4	Voter 5	Voter 6	Voter 7	Total item score	Percentage	Rank Priority	Voter Consensus
<b>Understanding and Use of Psycho-Educational Approaches</b>	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
1. I understand the basic concept of the psycho-educational approach.	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
2. I often use a psycho-educational approach in counseling sessions.	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
3. Psychoeducational approaches are effective in dealing with aggressive behavior.	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
4. I have received adequate training in the use of psychoeducational approaches.	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	17	80.95	5	Suitable
5. I am confident in my ability to apply a psycho-educational approach.	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	18	85.71	4	Suitable
<b>Educational Psycho Techniques</b>	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
1. I use emotional management techniques in dealing with aggressive behavior.	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	18	85.71	4	Suitable
2. I teach problem-solving skills to clients with aggressive behavior.	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	19	90.48	3	Suitable
3. I use behavioral modeling techniques in counseling sessions.	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable

4. I apply social skills training in my psycho-educational approach.	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	<b>100</b>	1	Suitable
5. I use positive reinforcement techniques to encourage desired behaviors.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
<b>Effectiveness of Psychoeducational Approach</b>	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
1. My client showed a reduction in aggressive behavior after attending psychoeducational sessions.	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
2. The psycho-educational approach helps to increase the self-awareness of the client.	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
3. Clients can apply the skills learned in their daily lives.	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
4. I noticed an improvement in the client's communication skills after using the psycho-educational approach.	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
5. The psycho-educational approach helps clients manage anger more effectively.	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	19	<b>90.48</b>	3	Suitable
<b>Challenges and Improvements</b>	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	95.24	2	Suitable
1. I need more resources to effectively apply the psycho-educational approach.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
2. The psychoeducational approach takes a long time to show results.	1	3	3	2	2	1	3	15	<b>71.43</b>	6	Suitable
3. I believe that the psycho-educational approach needs to be adapted according to the local culture.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
4. I am interested in deepening my knowledge about psycho-educational approaches.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
<b>Perception of Long-Term Effectiveness</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	100	1	Suitable
1. Psychoeducational approaches have a long-term effect in reducing aggressive behavior.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
2. Clients who participated in psycho-educational sessions showed improvement in self-management.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
3. The psycho-educational approach helps in the prevention of aggressive behavior in the future.	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	<b>100</b>	1	Suitable
4. I believe the psycho-educational approach is more effective than the traditional approach in dealing with aggressive behavior.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable
5. The use of psycho-educational approaches increases my job satisfaction as a counselor.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	20	<b>95.24</b>	2	Suitable

The findings from the study indicate a strong consensus on the effectiveness of psycho-educational strategies in managing aggressive behavior. The five key constructs analyzed: Understanding and Use of Psycho-Educational Approaches, Educational Psycho Techniques, Effectiveness of the Psychoeducational Approach, Challenges and Improvements, and Perception of Long-Term Effectiveness and all received high levels of agreement among respondents. Notably, the Perception of Long-Term Effectiveness ranked the highest, with 100% agreement, suggesting that counselors have strong confidence in the sustained impact of these strategies. Additionally, both the Effectiveness of the Psychoeducational Approach and Challenges and Improvements constructs scored 95.24%, emphasizing not only the effectiveness of the approach but also areas requiring refinement, such as resource availability and cultural adaptation.

A deeper analysis of individual items reveals that counselors generally understand and frequently apply psycho-educational strategies, with most items in this construct receiving agreement levels between 90.48% and 95.24%. However, the item on training adequacy scored lower (80.95%), suggesting a need for enhanced

training programs to ensure more comprehensive implementation. In terms of specific Educational Psycho Techniques, social skills training emerged as the most highly valued method (100% agreement), while behavioral modeling and positive reinforcement were also rated highly (95.24%). However, emotional management techniques received a slightly lower score (85.71%), indicating potential challenges in their practical application or a gap in counselor preparedness.

The effectiveness of the psycho-educational approach was well supported, with all items in this category scoring 95.24%, affirming that these methods help reduce aggressive behaviors, improve self-awareness, and enhance communication skills. However, the item assessing the effectiveness of anger management strategies was rated slightly lower (90.48%), implying that additional interventions or refinements might be necessary. The Challenges and Improvements construct highlighted key concerns, with resource constraints (95.24%) being a major issue in implementing psycho-educational strategies effectively. Similarly, the need for cultural adaptations was rated highly (95.24%), stressing the importance of tailoring interventions to specific demographic and societal contexts. The item addressing the time-consuming nature of these strategies received the lowest score (71.43%), indicating that counselors may find the approach impractical in fast-paced counseling environments.

Overall, the Perception of Long-Term Effectiveness construct received overwhelming support, with 100% agreement that psycho-educational approaches contribute to the long-term prevention of aggressive behavior. Additionally, counselors reported high levels of job satisfaction with these strategies, reinforcing their preference for psycho-educational methods over traditional approaches (95.24%). These findings underscore the widespread acceptance of psycho-educational strategies as an effective means of addressing aggressive behavior, while also highlighting key areas for improvement, particularly in training, resource allocation, and the adaptability of these approaches to different cultural settings.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Psycho-educational approaches play a pivotal role in counseling, with a wealth of research validating their significant impact on behavioral improvements, emotional regulation, and the development of social skills. Among these, social skills training has been particularly highlighted as an effective tool for fostering interpersonal competence. This aligns with findings that underscore the necessity of structured psychoeducation in enhancing emotional intelligence and facilitating positive behavioral transformations (Hussin et al., 2020). Furthermore, psychodynamic counseling and cognitive-behavioral techniques have demonstrated their efficacy in promoting behavioral adjustments and increasing self-awareness among students. This broad utility of psycho-educational strategies indicates their adaptability in addressing various psychological and emotional challenges in different educational and counseling settings (Odhiambo et al., 2019).

However, despite their proven effectiveness, psycho-educational approaches often encounter significant implementation challenges. One of the primary obstacles is the need for cultural adaptation, as interventions that are not tailored to the cultural backgrounds of individuals may not yield optimal results. Additionally, resource limitations pose a significant barrier to the widespread adoption of psycho-educational strategies. Studies suggest that overcoming these barriers is crucial to maximizing the benefits of psycho-educational interventions. For instance, effective implementation necessitates culturally sensitive methods and sufficient training resources to ensure that counselors are equipped to apply these strategies effectively in various environments (Topping, 2022). This perspective is reinforced by research indicating that constraints in resources and a lack of adequate professional development opportunities significantly hinder the scalability and long-term sustainability of these interventions (Dahiya & Lata, 2024).

To enhance the effectiveness and ensure the sustainability of psycho-educational approaches, a strategic focus on continuous professional training and resource allocation is imperative. Addressing gaps in counselor training through experiential and cooperative learning models can significantly enhance competencies, ensuring that counselors are well-prepared to integrate psycho-educational strategies into their practice (Talling et al., 2020). Additionally, embedding psychoeducation within broader educational curricula can create systemic support, fostering an environment where psycho-educational interventions become an integral part of the learning experience. This approach ensures a more consistent and long-term impact on students' behavioral and emotional development.

In summary, while psycho-educational strategies have been widely recognized for their effectiveness in promoting behavioral change, emotional intelligence, and social competence, their successful application depends on addressing challenges related to cultural relevance, professional training, and resource availability. By investing in the professional development of counselors, ensuring culturally tailored interventions, and integrating psychoeducation within educational frameworks, these approaches can be optimized for maximum impact and long-term sustainability.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The findings of this study underscore the effectiveness of psycho-educational strategies in managing and reducing aggressive behavior among students. Techniques such as social skills training, behavioral modeling, and problem-solving approaches have proven to be instrumental in fostering positive behavioral changes. From the perspective of counselors, these strategies have significantly contributed to improvements in self-regulation, emotional control, and overall behavioral management among students. Despite these benefits, certain challenges persist, including limited resources, the need for culturally relevant adaptations, and difficulties in implementation. These barriers highlight areas for enhancement, as addressing them is essential for maximizing the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of these interventions.

To build on these insights, future research should emphasize the development of culturally responsive psycho-educational modules tailored to diverse student populations. Furthermore, integrating digital tools and technology-driven interventions could help mitigate resource constraints, making these strategies more accessible to a wider audience. Another crucial area for exploration is the long-term impact of psycho-educational interventions, particularly their effects on students' mental health and behavioral stability over time.

Moving forward, advancing this field requires a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach. This includes continuous professional development for counselors, leveraging innovative technologies to enhance intervention delivery, and refining existing strategies to ensure their adaptability across different educational contexts. These collective efforts will not only improve the implementation of psycho-educational practices but also contribute to the holistic growth and emotional well-being of students in the long run.

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