



Fostering Academic Self-Efficacy in Adolescents: A Case Study of Counseling Strategies in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine and evaluate various counseling service approaches to enhance the self-confidence of 11th-grade high school students. Self-confidence is a crucial aspect that influences students' academic success and social development. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach, involving in-depth interviews with students and guidance counselors (BK teachers) at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati, as well as analysis of documentation related to the counseling programs available at the school. The results show that guidance counselors play a central role in providing individual and group counseling services aimed at motivating and assisting students in building their self-confidence. Effective collaboration among guidance counselors, school principals, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers in designing systematic counseling programs significantly contributes to the success of these services. This study recommends the development of integrated and sustainable counseling services to support students' psychological well-being and improve their academic achievement comprehensively.

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dan mengevaluasi berbagai pendekatan layanan konseling dalam meningkatkan kepercayaan diri siswa SMA kelas X. Kepercayaan diri merupakan aspek penting yang memengaruhi keberhasilan akademik dan perkembangan sosial siswa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, yang melibatkan wawancara mendalam dengan siswa dan guru Bimbingan Konseling (BK) di SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati, serta analisis dokumentasi program layanan konseling yang ada di sekolah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru BK memegang peran sentral dalam memberikan layanan konseling individu maupun kelompok yang bertujuan memotivasi dan membantu siswa dalam membangun rasa percaya diri. Kerjasama yang baik antara guru BK, kepala sekolah, wali kelas, dan guru mata pelajaran dalam merancang program bimbingan konseling yang sistematis sangat berkontribusi pada keberhasilan layanan tersebut. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pengembangan layanan konseling yang terintegrasi dan berkelanjutan agar dapat mendukung kesejahteraan psikologis serta meningkatkan prestasi akademik siswa secara menyeluruh.

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Introduction

Self-confidence is considered one of the most essential psychological components in the developmental process of adolescents, especially for 11th-grade high school students who are in a critical transitional period as they move toward early adulthood (Alrashidi *et al.*, 2023). At this stage of life, students are confronted with a growing number of complex academic responsibilities and social challenges, which demand a strong sense of belief in their personal capabilities in order to successfully manage stress, overcome obstacles, and strive toward realizing their full developmental potential. Possessing a solid level of self-confidence enables students not only to improve their motivation to learn but also to communicate more effectively with others and to make well-informed decisions about their academic and personal futures (Astiwi *et al.*, 2024).

Nevertheless, a significant number of 11th-grade students continue to struggle with issues stemming from a lack of self-confidence in their daily lives (Sadiyah *et al.*, 2025). Contributing factors to this problem include academic pressure from the school environment, frequent comparisons with peers through social and academic performance, as well as uncertainty about preparing for exams and planning for the future all of which often lead students to feel insecure and doubtful about their own competencies. This state of low self-confidence can have a detrimental impact on students' academic performance, the quality of their social relationships, and their overall mental and emotional well-being (Janah *et al.*, 2025).

Given these challenges, schools have a vital and strategic role in providing comprehensive support systems that help students cultivate and strengthen their self-confidence (Li *et al.*, 2022). One of the most effective forms of support that schools can offer is structured counseling services, which are specifically designed to address and help students overcome a wide range of psychological barriers that may hinder their growth and self-belief (Harahap *et al.*, 2025). Through participation in counseling programs, students have the opportunity to receive personalized guidance, emotional support, and practical self-development strategies that can foster greater self-assurance.

In order to be effective, the counseling approaches adopted must be closely aligned with the specific developmental needs, characteristics, and challenges faced by students in the 11th grade (Tham *et al.*, 2022). A variety of intervention techniques such as one-on-one individual counseling, peer group counseling sessions, and evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy can be implemented to help students discover their personal strengths, effectively manage stress and emotional distress, and build a more positive and empowering self-image (Tarso *et al.*, 2025; Mala *et al.*, 2025). When tailored properly, these counseling approaches are believed to have a meaningful and long-lasting effect on the development of student self-confidence.

Despite the potential and importance of counseling services, their practical implementation in schools is often hindered by several challenges, including a shortage of qualified school counselors,



low levels of student awareness or interest in seeking psychological help, and the lack of well-integrated approaches that fully meet the individualized needs of students (Siswanto *et al.*, 2025). As a result, there is an urgent need to conduct in-depth and systematic research to explore and identify the most effective counseling methods that can specifically benefit 11th-grade high school students.

Research focused on counseling approaches to strengthen self-confidence among 11th-grade students is therefore crucial in order to gain deeper insights into which strategies work best, how they can be implemented effectively, and how they can be adapted to different school contexts. The outcomes of such research are expected to serve as valuable references for school counselors, administrators, and educational policymakers in developing counseling programs that are more targeted, responsive, and impactful in addressing students' real psychological needs.

This research aims to investigate, examine, and assess the counseling methods implemented to enhance the self-confidence of 11th-grade students within the school environment. Furthermore, it seeks to provide actionable, evidence-informed recommendations to improve the effectiveness of school-based counseling services, ultimately supporting students' psychological well-being and academic achievement in a holistic and enduring way.

Method

The research method employed in this study is a qualitative approach using descriptive research design. This study was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati with the aim of providing an in-depth description of the self-confidence levels of 11th-grade students, the influencing factors, and the role of school guidance and counseling (GC) teachers in enhancing students' self-confidence. Data collection

techniques included in-depth interviews with both students and counseling teachers, as well as documentation related to the implementation of the school's guidance and counseling programs. The data obtained were analyzed qualitatively through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, in order to generate a comprehensive understanding of the students' self-confidence condition and the intervention strategies that have been implemented by the school (Creswell, 2014; Saleh *et al.*, 2025).

Results

1. Student self-confidence condition

Self-confidence is an essential element of an individual's personality that significantly influences human life and the success one can achieve (Vasiou *et al.*, 2023). In various aspects of life, achievement often requires a strong sense of self-confidence. However, in reality, many individuals even those with strong academic abilities still face difficulties due to low self-confidence. This is because self-confidence is not something that naturally develops without deliberate effort or support.

A person with a high level of self-confidence is generally able to appreciate both themselves and others and demonstrate responsibility for their actions. According to McDermott *et al.* (2023) and Wahyuni *et al.* (2025), individuals with high self-confidence tend to appear calm, are not easily frightened, and are able to demonstrate confidence in various situations. Unfortunately, not all students possess these characteristics. Many of them instead show signs of low self-confidence, such as hesitation, lack of initiative, giving up easily, and reluctance to appear or speak in front of others.

The results of interviews conducted with 11th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati revealed that the majority of them exhibit low levels of self-



confidence. This is evident from behaviors such as being unwilling to express opinions, hesitant to ask questions when they do not understand the lesson, and tending to be passive or unsure when speaking in front of the class. Some students even choose to remain silent when asked by the teacher to come forward. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the overall self-confidence level of 11th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati is still relatively low and requires serious attention and appropriate intervention so that it does not hinder their development in the future.

2. Factors causing students' lack of self-confidence

A lack of self-confidence among students can hinder academic success and lead to internal problems, such as reduced concentration and suboptimal learning outcomes (Taylor *et al.*, 2022). Based on interview results, the causes of low self-confidence vary and include feelings of shyness, fear of making mistakes, fear of being mocked, and introverted personality traits. Although most students generally behave well, some tend to isolate themselves and are not socially active. Nevertheless, their attitudes toward teachers remain respectful, and they rarely violate school rules.

According to Samawati and Kurniasari (2021) and Dolapcioglu and Doğanay (2022), self-confidence can decline as a result of experiences such as rejection, ridicule, or when others fail to reciprocate openness. Even when support is present, a reluctance to open up can still become a significant barrier. The factors influencing students' self-confidence originate both from within the individual and from external environmental influences. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the root causes in order to develop and foster self-confidence in a proper and sustainable manner.

3. The role of guidance and counseling teachers in increasing student self-confidence

Based on the results of interviews and documentation, Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers play a crucial role in assisting students who experience issues with self-confidence. Students with a healthy level of self-confidence generally appear more composed and are not hesitant to express their opinions in class. In contrast, students who lack the courage to speak up often face obstacles in the learning process. As stated by Pramana *et al.* (2021) and Phage *et al.* (2023), GC teachers hold full responsibility for providing guidance and counseling services to students as part of their role in supporting academic success and personal development.

In practice, GC teachers provide motivation through both individual and group counseling services. According to Tarso, Siswanto and Setiawan (2025), the goal of school-based guidance and counseling is to help students achieve personal well-being and attain the objectives of national education. GC teachers approach students who show signs of low self-confidence, inquire about the underlying causes, and provide information services on how to build self-confidence (Kintoko *et al.*, 2025). For instance, students who struggle with social interaction are supported through counseling sessions to help them gain the courage to speak in public and build positive social relationships with peers.

To support this program, GC teachers systematically design services in collaboration with the school principal, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers. They develop guidance programs tailored to the specific needs of students, particularly those with low self-confidence (Hanama *et al.*, 2024). These programs include counseling schedules, informative materials, and follow-up actions such as continuous motivation. The principal also



provides full support by ensuring the availability of a dedicated counseling room and complete administrative resources, enabling the guidance services to function optimally in helping students build the confidence needed to achieve future success.

Discussion

Self-confidence is a crucial aspect of students' personality development, significantly influencing their success in the learning process. Without self-confidence, students tend to experience difficulties in expressing their opinions, actively participating in class, and even in understanding learning materials. Interviews with 11th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati revealed that a majority of them have low levels of self-confidence. This finding is consistent with Hatmoko *et al.* (2025), Apriwulan *et al.* (2025) and Rambe *et al.* (2025), who stated that low self-confidence can be a serious barrier to academic achievement. This condition warrants particular attention, as it affects not only academic performance but also students' social development in school.

The low self-confidence observed among students is influenced by various factors, both internal and external (Astutik, *et al.*, 2025; Hastuti *et al.*, 2021; Putri *et al.* 2025). Based on documentation and interview results, several students expressed reluctance to ask questions or speak in class due to feelings of shyness, fear of making mistakes, and fear of being laughed at. Some students also had quiet personalities and were less active in social interactions. These findings are supported by Dewi (2022) and Mimin (2023), who emphasized that ridicule, rejection, and a lack of responsiveness to openness can significantly diminish an individual's self-confidence. Therefore, understanding these underlying factors is essential for teachers and school staff to implement appropriate interventions.

In addressing this issue, Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers play a central role. As stated by Devitasari *et al.* (2022) and Pratama (2023), GC teachers have full responsibility for providing counseling services to students, particularly in supporting both their personal and academic development. At SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati, GC teachers actively carry out individual approaches with students who show signs of low self-confidence. They inquire about the root causes and offer informational or counseling services on how to improve self-confidence. This effort aligns with the research of Tseng *et al.* (2022), McDermott *et al.* (2023) and Dinh *et al.* (2025), which demonstrated that group counseling services are effective in enhancing self-confidence among senior high school students.

GC teachers do not work in isolation; instead, they collaborate with the school principal, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers to design a systematic counseling program. This program includes identifying students with low self-confidence, creating counseling schedules, and providing ongoing motivational follow-up. Research by Badriah *et al.* (2023), Falloon (2024), and Suryani *et al.* (2024) notes that the effectiveness of counseling services is highly dependent on the integration and cooperation between GC teachers and other school stakeholders in designing and implementing programs that are responsive to student needs. With the support of school facilities such as a dedicated counseling room and necessary supplies counseling services can be carried out more effectively to help students build the self-confidence they need for future success.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that self-confidence is a crucial aspect that significantly influences students' academic success and social



development. The self-confidence level of 11th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati is relatively low, which is attributed to various internal and external factors such as shyness, fear of making mistakes, and a lack of environmental support. Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers play a central role in helping students overcome these challenges through structured counseling services, both individual and group-based. Collaboration among GC teachers, school principals, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers is key to designing effective and targeted guidance programs. With full support from the school administration, counseling services can be implemented optimally to assist students in building self-confidence as a foundation for achieving academic success and improved social well-being.

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