



The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Increasing Elementary School Students' Self-Confidence: A Literature Study

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Keywords:	Abstract
Guidance and counseling Self-confidence Elementary school students	Background: Low self-confidence can make students hesitant to ask questions, express opinions, and participate in learning. Guidance and counseling is one effort to develop it. This study examines the role of guidance and counseling in improving the self-confidence of elementary school students. Method: This study used a literature review with a descriptive qualitative approach. The data were 15 scientific journal articles collected through Google Scholar and academic journal portals, which were then analyzed using thematic analysis. Result: The guidance and counseling services reviewed include group services, namely group guidance using symbolic modeling and sociodrama techniques as well as group counseling, and individual services using the self-instructional technique. Studies that tested these services reported increased self-confidence scores, and students became more assertive in asking questions, speaking, and interacting with peers. The services were delivered by guidance counselors or classroom teachers with support from teachers, peers, parents, and the learning environment. Most of the evidence comes from pre-experimental designs with relatively small samples. Implication: Guidance counselors and classroom teachers can use role- and modeling-based group guidance, as well as individual services for students who need them. Schools need to strengthen classroom teachers' counseling skills and collaborate with parents. Future research should use control groups and larger samples.

INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is a crucial part of elementary school student development because it influences their courage to express opinions, ask and answer questions, and participate in learning. Students who lack self-confidence tend to be afraid of making mistakes, doubt their abilities, and choose to remain silent when asked to participate. This situation requires attention because elementary school is a crucial time for building self-confidence and

developing students' potential. Guidance and counseling (BK) is needed to help students recognize their abilities and develop self-confidence to its full potential.

Elementary school students' self-confidence has been studied from various aspects. Nurharini and Ramandhani (2025) analyzed students' self-confidence in the learning process, Lutfiyah et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of non-cognitive strategies, and Rosmi and Intan (2025) showed a relationship between independent character and learning self-confidence of third-grade students at SDN Kedoya Utara 04. These findings show that self-confidence can be viewed from various aspects and approaches.

In terms of guidance and counseling services, Aldina et al. (2025) examined the effectiveness of group counseling, while Azahra and Hayati (2026) examined the use of individual counseling to help students build self-confidence. Elviana et al. (2023) and Gibran and Hayati (2025) highlighted the role of classroom teachers in providing guidance and counseling services, and Pabenjanan and Tesalonika (2026) examined the application of role-playing techniques in group guidance. Hasibuan et al. (2024) used a qualitative descriptive approach to describe the role of guidance and counseling teachers in increasing the self-confidence of elementary school students in Brandan Timur Baru Village. These studies are relevant because the implementation of guidance and counseling services in elementary schools does not only depend on guidance and counseling teachers but can also involve classroom teachers, especially in schools that do not yet have counselors.

However, these studies generally discuss a single service, technique, or service provider. A comprehensive understanding of the types of services implemented, their contribution to student self-confidence, and their suitability to the characteristics of elementary school students remains fragmented. Therefore, a literature review is needed that not only presents the results of each study but also compares and synthesizes relevant findings.

Based on this background, this study aims to: (1) identify the types of guidance and counseling services and strategies used to increase the self-confidence of elementary school students; (2) analyze the contribution of these services and strategies to the development of student self-confidence; and (3) identify the findings and limitations of previous research as a basis for developing guidance and counseling services. The research question asked is what is the role of guidance and counseling in increasing the self-confidence of elementary school students based on the results of literature studies? The results are expected to be a reference for class teachers, school counselors, and researchers in designing guidance support that helps students be more confident in learning and interacting.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a literature review with a qualitative descriptive approach. This method was chosen to examine, describe, and integrate findings from various previous studies on the role of guidance and counseling in improving elementary school students' self-confidence. The study focused on the types of guidance and counseling services implemented, their implementation strategies, and their contribution to the development of students' self-confidence. The synthesis of findings was descriptive in nature and was not intended to be a statistical test of influence.

Data and Data Sources

The research data consists of secondary data sourced from scientific journal articles. Articles were searched through Google Scholar and scientific journal portals, and 15 articles published between 2018 and 2026 were analyzed in this study. Articles were selected based on three criteria: the suitability of the content to the research focus, the involvement of elementary school students as study subjects, and the presence of discussions about services, strategies, or forms of support related to increasing student self-confidence.

Articles that were not relevant to the research objectives or did not contain sufficient information were not used as primary sources.

Most articles report empirical research. Quantitative research includes group guidance trials (Kusumawati, 2023; Perianto & Jayanti, 2023), experiments on group counseling and classroom teacher-based services (Aldina et al., 2025; Elviana et al., 2023), self-instructional techniques (Gustia et al., 2018), and quantitative descriptive surveys (Khafidzin et al., 2025). Qualitative research includes descriptive studies on the role of guidance counselors (Amir et al., 2023; Hasibuan et al., 2024) and case studies of group and individual counseling (Hermawan et al., 2025; Mujahadah et al., 2026). The other five articles are literature studies (Asmaida & Darmayanti, 2024; Gibran & Hayati, 2025; Lutfiyah et al., 2025; Mutmainah et al., 2025; Pabenjanan & Tesalonika, 2026). A summary of the fifteen articles is presented in Table 1. Other literature referred to in the Introduction and Discussion sections serves as supporting information and is not included in the fifteen articles analyzed.

Table 1. Summary of the articles reviewed

No	Author (Year)	Methods and Subjects	Theme
1	Kusumawati (2023)	Quantitative, pre-experimental; 32 fourth grade students	Group guidance and modeling techniques
2	Perianto & Jayanti (2023)	Quantitative experiment; 5 fourth grade students	Group guidance and sociodrama
3	Hermawan et al. (2025)	Qualitative case study; 10 fifth grade students	Group counseling
4	Pabenjanan & Tesalonika (2026)	Literature review	Group guidance and role playing
5	Aldina et al. (2025)	Quantitative research using experimental methods; A total of 20 students of class XI of Mataram Vocational School	Group counseling
6	Asmaida & Darmayanti (2024)	Literature study	Group counseling
7	Mujahadah et al. (2026)	Case study; all fifth grade students	Individual counseling
8	Gustia et al. (2018)	Self-instructional techniques; one fifth grade student	Individual counseling and cognitive techniques
9	Khafidzin et al. (2025)	Descriptive quantitative; 30 students of Pabean Elementary School	Individual and group services
10	Hasibuan et al. (2024)	Qualitative descriptive	The role of the guidance and counseling teacher
11	Gibran & Hayati (2025)	Literature review	Class teacher support
12	Elviana et al. (2023)	Experimental research; 8 people	Class teacher support
13	Amir et al. (2023)	Qualitative descriptive; 60 students	The role of the guidance and counseling teacher
14	Mutmainah et al. (2025)	Literature study	The role of guidance and counseling, student self-confidence
15	Lutfiyah et al. (2025)	Literature study with a descriptive qualitative approach; 20 scientific articles	Developing self-confidence in elementary school students

Research Procedures

The research procedure was structured in four stages. First, the researcher selected a topic to be studied. Second, the researcher selected scientific articles that align with the focus of the study and their relevant content. Third, the researcher analyzed research findings related to the topic. Fourth, the researcher organized the writing of the review results. Article selection followed the PRISMA diagram (Table 2), which includes source identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and determining which articles to include in the analysis, resulting in a final selection of 15 articles.

Table 2. PRISMA diagram of article selection

Stage	Selection flow	Issued
Identification	Journals found through databases (n = 26)	
Filtering	Filtered journals (n = 20)	Irrelevant journals and excluded journals (n = 6)
Eligibility	Full text journals deemed eligible (n = 17)	Journals that were ignored for some reason (n = 2)
Entered	Journals included in the synthesis and included in the literature review (n = 15)	

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Data collection was conducted through searches on Google Scholar and scientific journal portals using the keywords guidance and counseling, student self-confidence, elementary school students, and guidance and counseling services in elementary schools. Each selected article was reviewed based on publication identity, research objectives, approaches or methods, and forms of guidance and counseling services and strategies, then summarized in an article summary table (Table 1).

Data Validity and Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis through five steps: in-depth reading of articles, recording key information, coding findings related to student self-confidence, grouping codes into themes, and synthesizing the findings narratively. Themes were formulated based on the research objectives, namely guidance and counseling services, self-confidence strengthening strategies, changes in students, and supporting factors for service implementation. Data validity was maintained by applying the same selection criteria to all articles, recording the identity and findings of each article in a summary table, and presenting the findings as reported by the original authors.

RESULTS

Understanding of Guidance and Counseling and Student Self-Confidence

The article reviewed understands guidance and counseling in elementary schools as a support service for students to recognize their potential and overcome academic, social, and personal problems. Elementary school is seen as a crucial time for building self-confidence, so guidance and counseling services are directed at developing students' courage in learning and interacting (Hasibuan et al., 2024).

Student self-confidence is understood as confidence in one's abilities, which is evident in the courage to ask questions, express opinions, be active, and participate in class. Its measurement includes aspects of communication, assertiveness, and personal appearance (Gustia et al., 2018; Khafidzin et al., 2025). Amir et al. (2023) linked self-confidence to

students' psychological conditions and the influence of teachers, peers, parenting styles, and the learning environment.

Guidance and Counseling Services

Guidance and counseling services in the reviewed articles are divided into group and individual services. Group services include group guidance using symbolic modeling techniques (Kusumawati, 2023), sociodrama (Perianto & Jayanti, 2023), and role-playing (Pabenjanan & Tesalonika, 2026), as well as group counseling (Aldina et al., 2025; Asmaida & Darmayanti, 2024; Hermawan et al., 2025). Individual services include individual counseling (Mujahadah et al., 2026) using self-instructional techniques (Gustia et al., 2018), while Khafidzin et al. (2025) combine individual and group services in one program.

Group services reach many students at once, while individual services are provided for students with prominent self-esteem issues.

Self-Confidence Strengthening Strategies

The strategies used in the article focus on role-playing, modeling, and thought management. Symbolic modeling techniques are used to increase the courage to ask questions (Kusumawati, 2023), sociodrama to increase self-confidence (Perianto & Jayanti, 2023), and role-playing to train the courage to communicate, interact, and express thoughts and feelings (Pabenjanan & Tesalonika, 2026). Self-instructional techniques transform negative automatic thoughts into adaptive statements (Gustia et al., 2018).

Literature reviews have added other strategies, including non-cognitive strategies such as art, games, group work, and self-reflection (Lutfiyah et al., 2025), as well as emotional support and motivation (Mutmainah et al., 2025). Group counseling has also been reported to provide a safe space for sharing and mutual support, allowing students to gain confidence in expressing their opinions (Asmaida & Darmayanti, 2024).

Changes in Self-Confidence in Students

Studies measuring change report increases in self-confidence scores. Group guidance using symbolic modeling techniques in 32 fourth-grade students increased their courage to ask questions, with the average score increasing significantly from 22.66 to 35.53 (Kusumawati, 2023). In five fourth-grade students, sociodrama techniques increased the average score from 80.60 to 89.20 ($p = 0.003$) (Perianto & Jayanti, 2023). A fifth-grade student's score increased from low (45.5) to medium (63.2) after being given self-instructional techniques, with the greatest increases in communication and assertiveness, while self-presentation and emotional control increased less (Gustia et al., 2018). A program combining individual and group services in 30 Pabean Elementary School students increased self-confidence from 3.1 to 4.2 and self-maturity from 3.0 to 4.1 (Khafidzin et al., 2025).

Changes in student behavior have also been reported in other studies. Group counseling for 10 fifth-grade students was associated with increased speaking confidence, class participation, and social relationships with peers (Hermawan et al., 2025). Aldina et al. (2025) examined the effectiveness of group counseling in fostering student self-confidence, and Mujahadah et al. (2026) examined individual counseling as a means of building student self-confidence. Most of this evidence comes from pre-experimental designs with relatively small samples.

Service Implementers and Supporting Factors

Guidance and counseling services in the reviewed articles are carried out by guidance and counseling teachers or class teachers. The role of guidance and counseling teachers is discussed by Amir et al. (2023) and Hasibuan et al. (2024), who report that guidance and counseling teachers play a role in helping to increase student self-confidence. The role of classroom teachers in providing guidance and counseling services is highlighted by Elviana et al. (2023) and Gibran and Hayati (2025). Mutmainah et al. (2025) conclude that guidance and counseling plays a role in increasing student learning motivation and self-confidence

through emotional support, motivation, and guidance and counseling services, with effectiveness determined by the implementation of services and the student's school environment.

Services are implemented with the support of teachers, peers, parents, and the learning environment (Amir et al., 2023). Because professional counselors are limited in elementary schools, collaboration between guidance counselors, classroom teachers, and parents is essential.

Summary of Study Results Themes

A thematic analysis of the fifteen articles yielded four themes: guidance and counseling services, self-confidence-boosting strategies, student change, and factors supporting service implementation. A summary of the themes and findings is presented in Table 3 and discussed in the Discussion section.

Table 3. Summary of the study results themes

No	Theme	Findings
1	BK Services	Group services (group guidance and counseling) and individual services play a role in boosting student self-confidence. Group services reach a wide range of students, while individual services are provided for students with significant self-confidence issues.
2	Self-confidence strengthening strategies	Symbolic modeling, sociodrama, role-playing, and self-instructional techniques, as well as non-cognitive strategies (art, games, group work, and self-reflection) and emotional support and motivation.
3	Changes in students	Self-confidence scores increased; students were more confident in asking questions, speaking up, and participating in class, were more assertive, and their social relationships with friends improved.
4	Supporting factors for service implementation	Services are run by guidance counselors or class teachers with the support of teachers, peers, parents, and the learning environment; collaboration between guidance counselors, class teachers, and parents is important due to the limited number of professional counselors.

DISCUSSION

The study results indicate that guidance and counseling services play a role in increasing the self-confidence of elementary school students, especially through group services. Services that provide students with opportunities to practice speaking, asking questions, and acting in structured situations, such as symbolic modeling, sociodrama, and role-playing, are associated with changes in student confidence in the classroom (Kusumawati, 2023; Pabenjanan & Tesalonika, 2026; Perianto & Jayanti, 2023). Group counseling provides a safe space for sharing and mutual support (Asmaida & Darmayanti, 2024), which may be related to increased confidence in speaking and social relationships in the case study by Hermawan et al. (2025). These findings are consistent with the results of Aldina et al. (2025) regarding the effectiveness of group counseling.

Beyond group services, student self-confidence can also be developed through individual services and strategies focused on cognition and character. Self-instructional

techniques that transform negative automatic thoughts into adaptive statements (Gustia et al., 2018) show that changes in how students perceive themselves are related to improved communication and assertiveness. Programs that combine individual and group services also increase student self-confidence and maturity (Khafidzin et al., 2025). This view aligns with Lutfiah et al.'s (2025) emphasis on non-cognitive strategies, Azahra and Hayati's (2026) research on individual counseling, and Rosmi and Intan's (2025) findings that independent character is related to third-grade students' learning confidence. Self-confidence is also influenced by the psychological condition of students, teachers, peers, parenting styles, and the learning environment (Amir et al., 2023; Nurharini & Ramandhani, 2025). Thus, the type of service needs to be tailored to the needs of students, namely group services to reach many students and individual services for students whose self-confidence issues are prominent.

The effectiveness of guidance and counseling services in elementary schools is determined by the implementation of the service and the student's school environment (Mutmainah et al., 2025). The role of guidance and counseling teachers is discussed by Amir et al. (2023) and Hasibuan et al. (2024), while the role of class teachers is highlighted by Elviana et al. (2023) and Gibran and Hayati (2025). The limited number of professional counselors in elementary schools means that counseling functions are often carried out by class teachers who are constrained by time and competence, so collaboration between guidance and counseling teachers, class teachers, and parents is crucial.

This research's contribution lies in compiling and comparing findings on group services, individual services, and the roles of guidance counselors and classroom teachers in a single study of elementary school students' self-confidence. Previous studies generally examined only one service or technique. The results of this study can serve as a reference for classroom teachers and researchers in selecting services that best suit their students' needs.

This study has several limitations. Although the findings are consistent, the strength of the evidence is limited by the predominance of pre-experimental designs without control groups or single subjects, with small samples from one or a few schools, making the results difficult to generalize. Some articles focused on describing the role of teachers rather than measuring changes in self-esteem, and there was little study of individual services and the role of parents. Future research is recommended to include control groups, larger samples, longer-term follow-up, and comparisons across service types.

CONCLUSION

Based on a review of 15 articles, guidance and counseling play a role in increasing the self-confidence of elementary school students through group services, namely group guidance using symbolic modeling, sociodrama, and role-playing techniques, as well as group counseling, and through individual services, namely individual counseling using self-instructional techniques. Research testing these services reported increased self-confidence scores, students' courage to ask questions, speak up, and participate in class, and more assertive attitudes. Services are run by guidance counselors or class teachers with support from teachers, peers, parents, and the learning environment.

Guidance counselors and classroom teachers can use role-based group counseling and modeling to help students speak up and ask questions, and provide individual support for students who lack confidence. Schools need to strengthen classroom teachers' counseling skills and build collaboration between guidance counselors, classroom teachers, and parents. This conclusion is limited by the strength of the available evidence, so future research needs to examine guidance counseling services with more robust designs to fully understand the role of guidance and counseling in improving elementary school students' self-confidence.

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