

The Effectiveness Of Group Counseling Services In Enhancing Students' Self-Confidence

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ABSTRACT

Background	The phenomenon of low self-confidence among students manifested in feelings of inferiority, nervousness, and lack of enthusiasm highlights the importance of group counseling to address the impact of the school environment that triggers stress and hinders student development.
Purpose	This study aims to examine the effectiveness of group counseling services in enhancing students' self-confidence through a supportive environment, positive interactions, and appropriate counseling strategies.
Research Methodology	Employing a qualitative approach, this research utilizes the Guidance and Counseling Action Research method, incorporating questionnaires, observations, documentation, and both quantitative and qualitative data analyses.
Result	The findings observed by the researchers indicate that group counseling is an effective method for improving students' self-confidence. Significant results were evident after counseling sessions, where out of five students initially exhibiting low self-confidence, four demonstrated a substantial increase in self-confidence. This study underscores the importance of group counseling services as an effective method to boost students' self-confidence. It is recommended to maintain ongoing focus on strategies that support students with low self-esteem to ensure all students can optimally realize their potential.
Conclusion	group counseling effectively enhances students' self-confidence, with the majority of participants experiencing significant positive changes following counseling sessions.
Keywords	Group Counseling, Self-Confidence, Guidance and Counseling, Students



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INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is a crucial aspect of students' academic development as it influences their self-perception, decision-making, and learning processes. Research indicates that self-confidence has a positive and significant relationship with academic achievement, particularly in mathematics (Febrianto et al., 2022). Furthermore, self-confidence fosters proactive learning and contributes to early career readiness, as evidenced by studies on finance and banking students (Pham et al., 2025). Additionally, family support can strengthen the relationship between self-confidence and academic performance (Zareena, 2020). In the context of online learning, students tend to exhibit higher levels of self-confidence compared to face-to-face learning, positively impacting their academic outcomes (Wei & Luo, 2025). Therefore, building self-confidence is an essential strategy to enhance student achievement.

Self-efficacy, as a component of self-confidence, plays a significant role in predicting student engagement and academic success. Factors such as teacher support and emotional resilience are known to enhance students' self-efficacy (Guo et al., 2025). In online learning environments, self-efficacy not only influences academic performance but also mediates the relationship between personality traits, such as conscientiousness, and learning outcomes (Code et al., 2021). Various strategies have been developed to improve students' self-confidence. For example, role-playing and active learning methods have been proven effective in increasing self-confidence in physical education subjects (Astuti et al., 2023). Moreover, the implementation of motivational strategies such as the Green strategy has been shown to boost the self-confidence of junior high school students in mathematics learning (Siregar et al., 2017). The application of these strategies is vital for creating a learning environment that optimally supports the development of students' self-confidence.

Field observations identified several eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im who exhibit low self-confidence, resulting in difficulties communicating with peers and speaking publicly. Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers revealed that many students feel nervous, uncomfortable, or reluctant to perform in front of the class due to fear of becoming the center of attention. Low self-confidence can hinder students from developing their potential and overcoming academic and social challenges. Students with such conditions tend to avoid interactions and are less capable of coping with pressures in the school environment. This situation necessitates efforts to enhance self-confidence so that students can perform better both academically and socially. A supportive school environment is crucial in helping students feel safe, accepted, and motivated during the learning process and personal development.

Counseling services play an important role in enhancing students' self-confidence through various structured and evidence-based approaches. One of the most commonly used techniques is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which includes self-instruction and cognitive restructuring. Studies have shown that self-instruction techniques are more effective in building students' self-confidence than cognitive restructuring (Chandra et al., 2019). Additionally, cognitive-behavioral approaches generally improve self-esteem and reduce depression in adolescents (Khaled, 2022). Group counseling employing reality counseling techniques also demonstrated significant positive effects on students' self-confidence compared to control groups (Fahmi et al., 2023). Furthermore, interpersonal group therapy applied to students with ADHD has been successful in increasing self-esteem, emotional maturity, and social competence (Shaikh, 2018). Group counseling practices designed with interactive approaches are highly beneficial for gradually and sustainably fostering self-confidence (Yoon & Yang, 2017).

Self-reflection techniques and self-compassion approaches also contribute significantly to strengthening students' self-confidence. Creative self-reflection practices implemented by counselor educators have been shown to increase active student participation and deepen their self-awareness in the process of personal

development (Sacco & Amende, 2021). Additionally, counseling services based on self-assessment help students become more confident in their future study choices, thereby reinforcing their self-confidence (Dahlan, 2020). Self-compassion exercises, such as cultivating self-kindness and mindfulness, are important in maintaining students' self-confidence and psychological well-being (Coaston & Lawrence, 2019). Customized training, such as the Tobacco Counseling Training Module, has successfully increased students' confidence in specific counseling skills (Chandrashekar et al., 2024). Empirical evidence shows that self-affirmation interventions enhance the readiness of veteran students to seek psychological help, leading to improved self-confidence (Seidman et al., 2018). Thus, counseling services that integrate reflective, empathetic, and adaptive approaches are strongly recommended to optimize the development of students' self-confidence (Dalvi et al., 2023).

Consequently, group counseling services represent an important form of guidance offered to students, particularly those with low self-confidence. These services serve as a means to assist students in developing interaction skills, public speaking, and overcoming feelings of embarrassment or hesitation when facing academic tasks. Based on the background presented, the primary issue identified is the low self-confidence among eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im, manifested by difficulties in peer communication, nervousness during speaking exercises, and fear when explaining assignments. This study focuses on how group counseling services can improve students' self-confidence. The objectives are to determine changes in self-confidence levels before and after the intervention and to evaluate the effectiveness of the counseling service. Theoretically, this research enriches Islamic guidance and counseling literature, while practically serving as a reference for schools in designing more effective services.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of group counseling and cognitive-behavioral approaches in improving students' self-confidence, limited research has examined the implementation of group counseling among Islamic junior secondary school students based on authentic school conditions. Empirical evidence regarding changes in students' self-confidence before and after counseling interventions also remains limited within the context of Islamic education. This study offers novelty by investigating the implementation of group counseling for eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im whose self-confidence issues were identified through observations and counselor interviews. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on specific counseling techniques, this research evaluates changes in students' self-confidence through pre- and post-intervention measurements while providing empirical evidence from the context of Islamic junior secondary education, which remains underexplored.

This study aims to analyze changes in students' self-confidence before and after participating in group counseling services and to evaluate the effectiveness of these services in improving the self-confidence of eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im. This study contributes to the development of Islamic guidance and counseling literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of group counseling in enhancing students' self-confidence. Practically, the findings offer valuable references for school counselors and educational institutions in designing more effective, evidence-based, and contextually appropriate counseling programs to support students' academic and social development. The findings are expected to improve students' self-confidence, communication skills, and classroom participation while providing practical guidance for developing more effective group counseling services in Islamic schools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using the Guidance and Counseling Action Research method. The research focuses on improving the self-confidence of eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im through group counseling services. The study was conducted directly within the school

environment, involving students as active participants. The research subjects consisted of 20 students, from which 7 students were selected to participate in the group counseling sessions, including 4 students with low self-confidence and 3 students with adequate self-confidence.

The research was carried out in two cycles, each comprising the stages of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. Observations were made to assess students' responses to the counseling services provided, while reflections were conducted to evaluate whether the actions taken had achieved the intended increase in self-confidence.

The study was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im, Kalanganyar, Banten, following a schedule that included initial observations, instrument development, group counseling implementation, and evaluation of outcomes. The first cycle consisted of two meetings involving questionnaire distribution, participant selection, group counseling sessions, behavioral observation during counseling, and reflection on the outcomes. If the results of the first cycle were deemed insufficient, improvements were made in the second cycle, which involved one additional meeting. During the counseling sessions, observations focused on student engagement, attention to the material, and behavioral changes indicative of increased self-confidence. Reflections at the end of each cycle were used to evaluate the process and outcomes of the service and to determine the need for further actions.

Data collection employed three main techniques: questionnaires, observation, and documentation. Questionnaires were administered at the beginning of each cycle to quantitatively measure the level of student self-confidence using a Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The questionnaire covered various aspects of self-confidence with indicators such as belief in one's abilities, which includes positive attitudes towards oneself and understanding of actions; optimism, relating to positive views about self and capabilities; objectivity, meaning acting according to reality rather than personal truths; and responsibility, which includes willingness to accept situations and readiness to face consequences.

Observations were conducted systematically and intentionally using sensory tools, primarily visual observation, to record activities at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im, including the school environment and interactions between students and teachers. The purpose of observation was to collect factual data and provide a detailed account of observed phenomena. Documentation involved recording past events such as the school profile, student questionnaire results, photographs, and relevant correspondence.

Data analysis in the Guidance and Counseling Action Research involved processing two main types of data: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data consisted of numerical learning outcomes or other measurable figures, while qualitative data included verbal descriptions such as students' expressions regarding cognitive understanding, enthusiasm, self-confidence, and motivation during the counseling process. The collection of both data types aimed to depict changes in student performance as well as the overall classroom atmosphere.

To measure changes in students' self-confidence levels through group counseling services, the percentage of success formula was used: $P = (f/N) \times 100\%$ $P = (Nf) \times 100\%$. Where PP represents the percentage of success, ff is the frequency of students showing positive changes, and NN is the total number of students participating in the service. The success indicator in this study is an increase in students' self-confidence after receiving counseling services, with a self-confidence score range considered good being between 76% and 100%. If the measurement results fall within this range, the study is considered successful.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher presents a descriptive analysis of the data obtained from the subjects and objects of the study, as well as events occurring during the research process. The data were collected through Guidance

and Counseling Action Research, which included counseling actions, observations, reflections, and evaluations. Initially, the researcher identified the problem by administering a self-confidence questionnaire to 20 eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im. This report displays the results of the analysis of the students' self-confidence questionnaire prior to receiving group counseling services, serving as a basis for subsequent counseling interventions in the study.

Table 1. Results of the Self-Confidence for All Eighth-Grade Students

No	Initials	Score	Category
1	OKNN	147	High
2	DDA	136	Low
3	VZR	134	Low
4	YMS	164	High
5	SHS	147	High
6	TSP	98	Very Low
7	SQA	157	High
8	AAH	132	Low
9	RAP	105	Very Low
10	FRA	105	Very Low
11	YRI	126	Low
12	FFM	110	Very Low
13	RFH	97	Very Low
14	NAI	185	High
15	HLA	139	Moderate
16	ASH	137	Low
17	AAY	86	Very Low
18	NFA	144	Moderate
19	ARF	150	High
20	SSB	83	Very Low

Note: Score 83–110 = Very Low; Score 126–137 = Low; Score 139–144 = Moderate; Score 147–158 = High

After analyzing the collected self-confidence questionnaires, it was found that five female students exhibited high self-confidence, three students had moderate self-confidence, five students had low self-confidence, and seven students had very low self-confidence. Subsequently, three students with very low self-confidence and two students with low self-confidence were selected to participate in group counseling services. Additionally, two students from the high self-confidence category were included, making a total of seven students. The results of the questionnaire prior to the group counseling services, involving seven subjects, are detailed in the following table.

Table 2. Self-Confidence Before Counseling Services

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	NAI	185	High
2	YMS	164	High
3	DDA	136	Low
4	VZR	134	Low
5	TSP	98	Very Low
6	RAP	105	Very Low
7	AAY	83	Very Low

Result: Self-confidence level = $2/7 \times 100 = 28\%$

The students' self-confidence level before receiving group counseling services was $2/7 \times 100 = 28\%$. The self-confidence level before the group counseling services showed a percentage of 28%. To determine the overall category of the sub-variable response results, it is necessary to first calculate the interval. The interval is obtained by subtracting the lowest score (N_r) from the highest score (N_t), then dividing by the number of categories (K). The formula used is: $I = \frac{N_t - N_r}{K}$, where I represents the score interval.

Cycle I, Meeting 1

In the first meeting, the researcher conducted group counseling services in class XIII at MTS Darunna'im, with a duration of approximately 60 minutes. The activity began with the forming stage, during which the group leader greeted the members, inquired about their well-being, led a prayer, and introduced themselves. Following this, the leader explained the objectives of the activity, as well as the meaning, purpose, methods, and principles of group counseling services. This stage was important to provide members with an overview and understanding of the process they would undergo.

Next, the transition stage involved the leader preparing the members to proceed to the next phase by seeking agreement regarding the topic to be discussed. After a brief discussion, the group members unanimously agreed to focus on the issue of "lack of self-confidence" for the session. This stage was crucial to ensure members felt comfortable and consented to the subject matter.

The third stage, the activity stage, constituted the core of the meeting. Members were given the opportunity to express their experiences and arguments related to low self-confidence. The leader encouraged each member to share personal stories, which facilitated an open and honest discussion. Other members contributed suggestions on overcoming low self-confidence, such as practicing public speaking, using daily positive affirmations, improving posture by standing upright and smiling, and transforming negative thought patterns into more positive ones. In addition to the discussion, members were invited to play the game "Simon Says," a simple game designed to train concentration, accuracy in following instructions, and quick thinking. This game was not only enjoyable but also strengthened social interaction among group members.

The fourth stage, the conclusion stage, involved the leader asking the group members to summarize the discussion results and provide commitments related to the material discussed. Throughout the discussion, behavioral changes were observed, particularly in TSP, who appeared more cheerful and courageous in expressing opinions despite some residual shyness. Other members exhibited diverse characteristics, such as DDA, who was quiet and hesitant to speak; AAY, who was bold and straightforward; VZR, who was doubtful and pessimistic; and RAP, who was brave and encouraged self-appreciation. This diversity of attitudes illustrated how each individual uniquely confronted issues related to self-confidence. This stage helped members become aware of their own conditions and commit to efforts to improve their self-confidence.

The fifth and final stage, the closing stage, involved the group leader announcing that the group counseling session was coming to an end and conducting a brief evaluation of the session's proceedings. Group members expressed positive impressions and stated their desire to continue with subsequent counseling sessions. The leader also inquired about the expected follow-up from the members, which led to the agreement to hold a second meeting. Before concluding the activity, the leader led a prayer, thanked the members, offered parting greetings, and exchanged warm handshakes. This process closed the session with a positive atmosphere full of togetherness, while instilling hope that the counseling activities would continue to benefit the group members.

Cycle I, Meeting 2

The second meeting of the group counseling service in class VIII at MTS Darunna'im lasted approximately 45 minutes. The group leader opened the session with a warm greeting and inquired about each

member's well-being, creating a comfortable atmosphere. After praying together, the leader briefly reminded the members of the objectives of the counseling service and explained its meaning and guiding principles.

During the transition stage, the leader ensured the members' readiness to proceed and obtained approval to discuss the topic of "nervousness." Members began sharing their experiences, including DDA, who admitted to often feeling nervous during discussions, fearing judgment, and having difficulty expressing opinions. Other members responded with understanding and empathy.

The activity stage began with the game "Simon Says," designed to train concentration and quick thinking, while also fostering social interaction. Subsequently, members took turns sharing their thoughts about nervousness, such as fear of public speaking, embarrassment during speeches, or tension during oral exams. The leader facilitated discussion on various strategies to overcome nervousness, including thorough preparation and regular practice, relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring of negative thoughts, and positive affirmations. Each member contributed personal tips, such as taking deep breaths, focusing on the material, speaking clearly, and not fearing mistakes.

Next, the leader asked members to share their attitudes and strategies used when feeling nervous before speaking. For example, DDA took deep breaths and smiled to relax; AAY spoke slowly and focused on delivering the message; TSP drank water to soothe the throat; VZR briefly squatted to regain focus; and RAP recalled key points to be conveyed. This discussion helped members learn from one another's experiences and discover effective ways to manage nervousness. It also strengthened the sense of camaraderie and support among group members in facing personal challenges.

During the closing stage, the leader summarized that the members' understanding of nervousness had improved and they were becoming more active in discussions. A cheerful and positive atmosphere was observed throughout the session, and members expressed their hope that the group counseling service would continue at the school. The leader evaluated the process and acknowledged the members' participation and commitment. The session ended with a prayer, parting greetings, and warm handshakes, closing on a note of togetherness and enthusiasm to continue counseling in the next meeting. Throughout the action, the researcher observed the activities in Cycle I. Following the group counseling session, the researcher reported an increase in students' self-confidence, as shown in the table below:

Table 3. Self-Confidence Questionnaire Results After the First Counseling Session

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	DDA	157	High
2	AAY	135	Low
3	VZR	155	High
4	TSP	148	High
5	RAP	168	High

Result: Increase in self-confidence = $4/5 \times 100 = 80\%$

Based on the questionnaire results, out of five students who previously had low self-confidence, three showed improvement during Cycle I, representing 60%. However, this result has not yet reached the desired target of 76% to 100%. Using the improvement formula, $P = \frac{35}{53} \times 100\% = 60\%$, it is evident that students' self-confidence has increased, though further improvement is necessary. Therefore, group counseling activities need to continue into Cycle II to achieve the established target. Reflection on these results indicates that the 60% improvement is still considered insufficient, necessitating evaluation and refinement of the methods used.

In evaluating Cycle I, the researcher noted that students began to understand the group counseling service and demonstrated greater enthusiasm and participation compared to the first meeting. At the start, group members were hesitant and shy to express their opinions, but over time they became more open and engaged in discussions. The researcher also conducted an immediate assessment (laissez) of students' development throughout the process, which indicated positive changes in attitude and self-confidence among group members. These evaluation results serve as the foundation for progressing to Cycle II with a new topic.

The first meeting of Cycle II was conducted on October 16, 2024, lasting approximately 45 minutes. The group leader began the session with a greeting, inquired about each member's well-being, and led a collective prayer before restating the objectives and principles of the group counseling service. Subsequently, the agreed-upon discussion topic was "fear of trying." During this discussion, students shared their experiences and perspectives regarding the fear of trying. DDA likened the fear of trying to the fear of falling when learning to ride a bicycle, while AAY expressed that fear stemmed from concerns about making mistakes and being ridiculed. VZR emphasized the importance of courage and learning from mistakes in order to avoid falling behind. This viewpoint was supported by RAP and TSP, who agreed that fear can be an obstacle, but courage to take steps forward is essential.

In the activity stage, the group leader invited members to discuss strategies for overcoming the fear of trying. Members suggested various approaches, such as focusing on lessons learned from failure, starting with small, gradual steps, confronting fears directly, understanding the root causes of fear, and employing breathing techniques and mindfulness to manage anxiety. The discussion was lively and enthusiastic.

During the closing stage, the leader concluded that the members' understanding was adequate, and the session was conducted in a cheerful and positive atmosphere. Members expressed their hope that the group counseling services would continue to be implemented at the school. The session ended with expressions of gratitude, a prayer, parting greetings, and handshakes, symbolizing unity and gratitude for the successful counseling session. Following the group counseling session, the researcher observed an increase in students' self-confidence, as indicated in the table below:

Table 4. Self-Confidence Questionnaire Results After the Second Counseling Session

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	DDA	157	High
2	AAY	135	Low
3	VZR	155	High
4	TSP	148	High
5	RAP	168	High

Result: Increase in self-confidence = $4/5 \times 100 = 80\%$

The questionnaire results from Cycle II indicate that four out of five students fall within the high self-confidence category. This demonstrates a significant improvement compared to the previous cycle, with an 80% increase in student self-confidence. This percentage meets the previously established target of at least 76%. This improvement confirms the effectiveness of group counseling services in helping students enhance their self-confidence. The increase was calculated using the formula $P = \frac{4}{5} \times 100\% = 80\%$, where 4 represents the number of students showing improvement, and 5 represents the total number of students who initially had low self-confidence. These results illustrate that group counseling plays a vital role in directly addressing issues of low self-confidence among students.

Based on the success criteria for group counseling services in improving student self-confidence, the following rating categories apply: 0%–30% is considered unsuccessful, 31%–60% less successful, 61%–75% moderately successful, and 76%–100% successful. The 80% result from Cycle II categorizes the group

counseling service as successful in improving student self-confidence. Additionally, the researcher's observations support this finding, as four out of five students showed significant improvement. With this achievement, it can be concluded that the issue of low self-confidence among students has been adequately addressed, and therefore, the study is considered complete after two cycles without the need to proceed to subsequent cycles.

The evaluation of the group counseling service implementation was comprehensive, encompassing the activity process, observations, and reflections. The evaluation revealed that by the third meeting, students had a good understanding of the group counseling service and exhibited enthusiasm and active participation in group dynamics. The meeting's theme, "fear of trying," provided a platform for students to openly express issues such as embarrassment, nervousness when voicing opinions, and fears that hinder their progress. Although most students showed positive development, one student had yet to achieve optimal improvement. This variation highlights individual differences in success rates despite the overall significant progress observed.

The results of this study demonstrate an improvement in students' self-confidence. This is evidenced by the comparison of self-confidence levels before and after the provision of group counseling services, as detailed below:

Table 5. Student Self-Confidence Questionnaire Results Before Counseling Services

No	Student Name	Score	Category
1	NAI	185	High
2	YMS	164	High
3	DDA	136	Low
4	VZR	134	Low
5	TSP	98	Very Low
6	RAP	105	Very Low
7	AAY	83	Very Low

Overall Result: Before counseling = 28% (Low self-confidence level)

The classroom action research conducted in Grade VIII at MTS Darunna'im consisted of two cycles, with Cycle I comprising two sessions and Cycle II one session. Prior to the counseling intervention, students' self-confidence levels were low, with a percentage of 28%. After Cycle I, an increase in self-confidence was observed in 3 out of 5 students, corresponding to 60%; however, this was still below the target of 76%. Factors such as limited understanding and students' hesitancy towards the counseling services were identified as barriers to improvement during the first cycle. Nevertheless, following the implementation of Cycle II, the number of students with high self-confidence rose to 4, or 80%, indicating the success of the group counseling service. Based on these results, it can be concluded that group counseling services are effective in significantly enhancing students' self-confidence in this class.

The findings of this study indicate a marked improvement in students' self-confidence following group counseling services. Before the intervention, most students exhibited low to very low levels of self-confidence. However, after the counseling sessions in Cycle I, a notable improvement was observed among several students. By the end of the intervention, the majority of students fell into the high self-confidence category, demonstrating that the group counseling process effectively assisted them in overcoming feelings of low self-esteem. Thus, group counseling services have proven effective in increasing students' self-confidence at MTS Darunna'im as a whole.

Supporting literature highlights the efficacy of group counseling programs utilizing cognitive-behavioral approaches in reducing depression and enhancing adolescents' self-esteem, which indirectly contributes to increased self-confidence (Hamdan, 2023). Furthermore, group counseling interventions incorporating

assertiveness training have shown positive outcomes in building students' self-esteem, closely linked to self-confidence; participants exhibited greater progress compared to control groups (Rusmana et al., 2020). Additionally, acceptance and commitment therapy combined with music therapy in group settings effectively improved perceived social support and self-esteem among university students, thereby strengthening their self-confidence (Min & Chao, 2020). Moreover, goal attainment theory-based counseling programs significantly enhanced self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and school adjustment in students with emotional and behavioral issues (Jeong & Kim, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Group counseling services significantly enhanced the self-confidence of eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im. At the pre-cycle stage, students' self-confidence was categorized as low, with only 28% showing high self-confidence based on questionnaire results. This condition indicates that most students initially experienced doubt, hesitation, and low self-belief in academic and social situations. After the implementation of group counseling in Cycle I, students' self-confidence increased to 60%, although this improvement had not yet reached the predetermined success indicator of 76%. The main challenge during this stage was students' limited understanding of the counseling process, which led to reluctance in participating actively and affected their self-efficacy and optimism. Through reflection and improvement of counseling strategies, Cycle II showed a significant increase, with students' self-confidence reaching 80%, exceeding the expected target. This result demonstrates that group counseling creates a supportive and safe environment where students can share experiences, express emotions, and receive peer encouragement. Furthermore, the counseling process helped students recognize their strengths and weaknesses, develop self-acceptance, increase gratitude, and reduce negative self-focus. It also strengthened students' motivation, communication skills, and willingness to engage in classroom activities. Overall, the findings confirm that group counseling is an effective intervention in improving students' self-confidence and supporting their personal and social development in a sustainable and meaningful way.

This study contributes to guidance and counseling literature by providing empirical evidence of group counseling effectiveness in improving students' self-confidence. Practically, it offers a useful reference for school counselors in developing structured and student-centered counseling interventions. This study is limited to a small sample of eighth-grade students at one madrasah, which may affect generalizability. The intervention was conducted within a short cycle period, and data relied mainly on questionnaires and observations, which may not fully capture long-term changes in students' self-confidence development. Future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples across different educational levels and institutions. It should also explore long-term effects of group counseling on self-confidence and combine quantitative and qualitative approaches, including interviews and behavioral assessments, to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth findings. Group counseling services effectively improve students' self-confidence by fostering support, communication, and self-awareness. This approach is recommended as a sustainable strategy in school counseling programs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher expresses sincere gratitude to Allah SWT for His blessings and guidance throughout the completion of this study. Appreciation is extended to the principal, guidance and counseling teacher, and students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Darunna'im for their cooperation and support during the research process. Special thanks are also given to supervisors and lecturers who provided valuable feedback, direction, and encouragement. The researcher acknowledges that the use of AI-based tools was limited to language

refinement, structure improvement, and grammar checking, while all ideas, analysis, and interpretations remain the researcher's original work and responsibility. This study is expected to contribute positively to the development of guidance and counseling practices, particularly in enhancing students' self-confidence through group counseling services. It is hoped that the findings will have a meaningful impact on improving students' personal growth, communication skills, and overall learning motivation in school environments.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- Author 1 : Contributed to the overall research design, development of the study framework, data interpretation, and final manuscript writing. This author also played a leading role in coordinating the research process and ensuring the consistency of analysis and findings.
- Author 2 : Was responsible for data collection, including administering questionnaires, conducting group counseling sessions, and documenting field observations during all cycles of the research.
- Author 3 : Was responsible for data collection, including administering questionnaires, conducting group counseling sessions, and documenting field observations during all cycles of the research.
- Author 4 : Contributed to proofreading, language editing, formatting, and reference management. This author also assisted in ensuring the manuscript followed academic writing standards and journal requirements.
- Author 5 : Edit manuscripts and final reports, including translation

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