

The Use Of Self-Management Strategies To Improve Students' Disciplinary Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Background	The disciplinary behavior of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School remains low, as indicated by frequent tardiness, non-compliance with school regulations, and poor dress neatness.
Purpose	To examine the implementation of self-management strategies in guidance and counseling services to effectively improve the disciplinary behavior of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School.
Research Methodology	This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using observation, interviews with guidance and counseling teachers and students, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed to examine the implementation of self-management strategies in improving the disciplinary behavior of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School.
Result	The findings indicate that the implementation of self-management strategies through guidance and counseling services has begun to produce positive changes in the disciplinary behavior of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School. Students demonstrated improvements in punctuality, proper school uniform appearance, and compliance with school regulations. These improvements were influenced by the students' ability to exercise self-control, set behavioral goals, and independently evaluate their actions. Although the changes were not yet significant for all students, there was clear evidence of increased self-awareness. Internal factors, such as motivation, and external factors, including support from guidance and counseling teachers, played important roles in the success of the behavioral change process.
Conclusion	Self-management strategies effectively improve students' disciplinary behavior gradually through strengthened self-control and continuous guidance and counseling services.
Keywords	Disciplinary Behavior, Self-Management Strategy, Students



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INTRODUCTION

Discipline plays an important role in achieving educational goals, where the quality of students is influenced by internal factors such as cognitive abilities, motivation, and interests, as well as external factors such as the family, school, and community environment (Ernawati, 2016). However, at Al Mukhtar Junior High School, it was found that students' disciplinary behavior remains inadequate, as reflected in their low awareness of the importance of discipline in daily life. Many students have not yet been able to direct and control their own behavior, resulting in weak discipline both at school and at home. This condition affects students' academic achievement and personality development. Gordon (1996) stated that children who lack discipline at home tend to experience problems at school (Ayatullah, 2020). Therefore, improving discipline should become a priority through collaboration between schools and families. Tarigan (2018) emphasized that group counseling services can effectively improve students' discipline. In addition, self-management strategies involving self-observation, goal setting, and self-evaluation can facilitate behavioral change (Fajriani et al., 2016).

Group counseling services can improve students' discipline through structured interaction, consistent guidance, peer support, and behavioral monitoring in school settings effectively and sustainably (Ellis et al., 2024). Self-management techniques in group counseling help students regulate behavior and strengthen responsibility toward school rules consistently and independently over time in practice processes (Sari, 2025). Quantitative studies show significant improvement in student discipline after group counseling interventions in junior high schools based on empirical research findings consistently observed (Gustiana et al., 2020). Behavior contract approaches within group counseling increase attendance and adherence to classroom regulations effectively through clear negotiated agreements among students and counselors consistently (Sa'adah & Nurudducha, 2025). Recent research indicates behavioral contract-based counseling strengthens discipline among high school students through clear agreements established during structured counseling sessions effectively and sustainably (Sawaludin et al., 2026).

Cognitive restructuring techniques in group counseling reduce negative thinking patterns and improve learning discipline by changing maladaptive student beliefs systematically over time gradually (Al Ihsan & Setyowati, 2023). Empirical evidence supports that group counseling improves student discipline across diverse educational contexts through collaborative peer interaction and guided sessions consistently across studies (Putrati et al., 2018). Local wisdom-based counseling models also contribute to improving discipline by aligning values with student behavior within culturally responsive school settings effectively in practice (Arifyadi et al., 2026). Positive reinforcement strategies in group counseling enhance students' motivation to follow school rules consistently through rewards and social encouragement mechanisms over time effectively (Durrutunnisa & Cristin, 2023). School counselor strategies integrating group counseling services strengthen discipline character formation in educational institutions through systematic planning and implementation processes sustainably in schools (Prameswary & Winingsih, 2025).

Self-management strategies play an important role in efforts to enhance students' discipline because these strategies emphasize student autonomy by encouraging individuals to monitor, evaluate, and reinforce their own actions to improve discipline and reduce misbehavior in structured learning contexts (Smith et al., 2022). Recent studies further confirm that self-management-based counseling and instructional strategies significantly improve student discipline and self-control in classroom environments through structured guidance and practice (Hodijah et al., 2025). Furthermore, self-management approaches are effective because they shift responsibility from external control to internal regulation, thereby promoting long-term behavioral improvement in students sustainably (Natasya, 2024). Self-management strategies are widely recognized as effective tools for promoting disciplined behavior, improving academic responsibility, and fostering independent learning habits among students across various educational levels consistently.

Self-management strategies have been widely recognized as effective approaches to improve students' discipline by encouraging responsibility, autonomy, and behavioral regulation in educational settings (Sari, 2025). In group counseling and classroom interventions, these strategies help students set personal goals, monitor behavior, and strengthen commitment to school rules consistently (Asmi et al., 2026). Empirical studies show that self-management-based group guidance services significantly increase student participation and reduce disciplinary problems in school environments (Sandowil & Aprinaldi, 2024). Instructional programs that teach self-management skills also enhance students' ability to regulate their learning behavior and improve academic discipline over time (Smolkowski et al., 2023). Research further indicates that students with stronger self-management skills tend to demonstrate higher academic performance and fewer behavioral violations in classroom settings (Khalid et al., 2024). Self-management training programs have also been shown to improve discipline after post-pandemic learning disruptions by rebuilding student responsibility and focus (Umam & Noor, 2024). In addition, self-management techniques integrated into counseling interventions effectively strengthen discipline among junior high school students through structured behavioral practice (Aprina et al., 2025). Systematic reviews confirm that self-management interventions improve both academic outcomes and behavioral regulation for students with diverse learning needs (Mooney et al., 2005).

Previous studies have shown that self-management strategies are effective in improving students' discipline; however, there are still limitations regarding their implementation in schools with specific student characteristics. In addition, few studies have specifically integrated guidance and counseling services with the disciplinary conditions of students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School, particularly regarding tardiness and dress neatness as indicators of disciplinary behavior. The novelty of this study lies in the implementation of self-management strategies directly integrated into guidance and counseling services at Al Mukhtar Junior High School to address disciplinary problems among eighth-grade students. This approach focuses not only on changing students' external behavior but also on strengthening their internal motivation. Furthermore, this study emphasizes a gradual process of developing discipline based on students' self-awareness rather than coercion, making it more sustainable and better suited to the actual conditions of the school.

This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of self-management strategies in guidance and counseling services to improve the discipline of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School. In addition, it seeks to identify changes in students' disciplinary behavior, particularly regarding punctuality and neatness in school attire. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of guidance and counseling research related to the application of self-management strategies for improving student discipline. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for guidance and counseling teachers in implementing more effective counseling services. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to schools by supporting the development of self-awareness-based discipline programs. The implementation of self-management strategies is expected to gradually improve students' discipline, establish positive habits, and foster responsibility and independence in complying with school regulations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method employed in this study on the use of self-management strategies to improve the disciplinary behavior of eighth-grade students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School during the 2023/2024 academic year was a qualitative study using a case study approach. This approach enabled the researcher to explore and gain an in-depth understanding of how self-management strategies influence students' disciplinary behavior. The qualitative case study method provided comprehensive and contextual insights into the implementation of self-management strategies and their impact on student discipline, allowing the researcher to examine the complexity and dynamics involved in the process of behavioral change.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: documentation, interviews, and observation. Documentation involved collecting and reviewing academic records, attendance lists, disciplinary reports, counseling records, and other relevant documents to obtain preliminary information regarding students' disciplinary behavior and the implementation of self-management strategies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with guidance and counseling teachers, homeroom teachers, students, and parents to gain comprehensive perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness of self-management strategies in improving student discipline. Direct observations were carried out in classrooms and throughout the school environment to examine students' disciplinary behavior, including punctuality, compliance with school regulations, and proper school uniform appearance, as well as to observe the implementation of guidance and counseling services using self-management strategies.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive data analysis model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, categorizing, and summarizing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation to identify themes related to students' disciplinary behavior and the application of self-management strategies. The condensed data were then organized through data display in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, and matrices to facilitate interpretation and comparison across different data sources. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the analyzed data. Throughout the analysis, the researcher continuously compared findings from different sources to ensure consistency and refine interpretations.

The trustworthiness of the data was established through technique triangulation, source triangulation, and member checking. Technique triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained through documentation, interviews, and observations to verify the consistency of the findings. Source triangulation involved comparing information gathered from different participants, including guidance and counseling teachers, homeroom teachers, students, and parents, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. In addition, member checking was conducted by returning interview summaries and preliminary interpretations to the participants to confirm that the findings accurately reflected their experiences and perspectives. Any discrepancies identified during this process were clarified through follow-up discussions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Student Discipline Behavior at Al Mukhtar Junior High School

The behavior of students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School has not yet reached an optimal level and remains lacking in terms of discipline. Discipline is one of the primary objectives outlined in the vision and mission of Al Mukhtar Junior High School, which focuses on educating students with strong character and noble morals. Ellen G. White (1875) explained that the purpose of discipline is to strengthen self-control, overcome weak willpower, correct bad habits, eliminate negative influences, and teach respect for parents and divine principles, rather than merely imposing coercion. Al Mukhtar Junior High School is an Islamic boarding school-based institution; therefore, its educational program largely follows the Islamic boarding school curriculum. However, the school also collaborates with programs from the Sampang Department of Education, integrating both approaches to improve the quality of education. Nevertheless, the challenge of achieving the expected level of discipline remains a primary concern (Ayatullah, 2020).

Al Mukhtar Junior High School is an Islamic boarding school-based institution, meaning that its educational program is strongly influenced by the Islamic boarding school curriculum. Within this educational system, considerable emphasis is placed on religious and moral aspects, which constitute an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Nevertheless, Al Mukhtar Junior High School also collaborates with the Sampang

Department of Education to integrate the Islamic boarding school curriculum with the general education programs administered by the department. This collaboration aims to combine religious educational values with broader national education standards in order to improve the quality of education received by students. However, despite the integration of the Islamic boarding school curriculum and the Department of Education programs, the greatest challenge faced by Al Mukhtar Junior High School is achieving the expected level of discipline. This aspect of discipline includes various factors, ranging from students' compliance with school regulations to time management and daily behavior. The school continuously strives to improve and adjust its approaches to meet these expectations while maintaining a balance between religious and academic values.

Research conducted at Al Mukhtar Junior High School regarding students' disciplinary behavior identified four types of disciplinary behavior: discipline at home, discipline at school, time discipline, and learning discipline, with a particular focus on Grade VIII students. The findings indicate that among Grade VIII students, violations of school discipline remain within the standard category, although some students have demonstrated positive behavioral improvement compared to previous conditions. In terms of learning discipline, students generally tend to be passive during the teaching and learning process, with approximately 15–20 students out of a total of 65 Grade VIII students displaying active participation. The main issues related to time discipline involve arriving late to school, returning home late, absenteeism without explanation, and delays in going home. In addition, discipline at home also presents several problems. Students frequently return home late, do not assist with household chores, and leave the house without informing their parents. These findings highlight behavioral changes among students that affect discipline both at home and at school. Further evaluation is needed to address these issues and improve students' disciplinary behavior at Al Mukhtar Junior High School so that they can achieve higher standards of discipline. According to Samsudin (1995), discipline is classified into home discipline, school discipline, time discipline, and learning discipline (Pujo et al., 2019).

Factors Influencing Student Discipline Behavior at Al Mukhtar Junior High School

Changes in students' disciplinary behavior are influenced by two factors. According to Slameto (2006), these factors consist of internal factors, which originate from within the students themselves, and external factors, which come from the students' surrounding environment (Islam, 2021). These factors each have their own roles and functions in influencing changes in students' disciplinary behavior. At Al Mukhtar Junior High School, particularly among Grade VIII students, several significant factors influence their behavior. One of the primary factors is the external environment, such as peer groups and the surrounding community. This environment has a strong influence because students at the Grade VIII level are in early adolescence, a developmental stage characterized by emotional instability. This condition often causes them to act without considering the long-term consequences of their actions. The family environment also plays an important role in shaping changes in students' disciplinary behavior. When parents do not actively participate in their children's development or fail to provide sufficient attention and affection, children may develop poor disciplinary behavior and inconsistent ways of thinking. Parents' educational involvement and participation in their children's learning process also influence their level of discipline. Without adequate family support, students may lack motivation and fail to demonstrate the expected disciplinary behavior.

In addition to family factors, the school environment also plays an important role in shaping students' disciplinary behavior. At Al Mukhtar Junior High School, although the school makes efforts to provide positive examples, such as teachers arriving earlier than students, dressing neatly, and providing educational consequences for students who violate school rules, challenges still remain. Teachers strive to instill discipline through their actions and attitudes. However, there are still obstacles, such as teaching methods that students perceive as boring or teachers who are considered overly strict, which may cause students to become less motivated and less interested in learning. The interview results in this study indicate that the social environment

of peers has a strong influence on students' behavior. Friends who are still emotionally unstable during adolescence can influence students' actions and attitudes because they are often affected by what their peers do. This finding demonstrates that external factors, such as peer environments, have a substantial impact on students' behavior.

To improve the discipline of Grade VIII students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School, it is important to consider all factors that influence their behavior. This includes improving the family environment by providing greater parental attention and support, as well as enhancing the school environment through more engaging teaching methods and more consistent support from teachers. With a comprehensive and coordinated approach, students' disciplinary behavior is expected to improve significantly.

Internal factors also play an important role in changes in students' disciplinary behavior, including cognitive aspects, interests, and motivation. Students are often faced with demands to do things they do not actually want to do. For example, parents may expect their children to always behave well and achieve high academic performance, or teachers may expect students to obey school rules without providing adequate motivation or encouragement. When students are forced to comply with these demands without supportive motivation, the outcomes are often negative. Motivation plays a crucial role in shaping disciplinary behavior. Without appropriate encouragement, the demands placed upon students may be perceived as unpleasant burdens, which can affect their attitudes and actions. For instance, if parents only demand high academic achievement without providing appropriate support or motivation, or if teachers merely emphasize compliance with school rules without offering encouragement, students may feel pressured or burdened.

Students tend to respond more positively to approaches that combine motivation and positive encouragement rather than coercion that ignores motivational aspects. Properly delivered motivation can encourage students to behave well and maintain discipline because they feel supported and motivated to achieve their goals. Conversely, without adequate motivation, students may feel forced, which can negatively affect their attitudes and behavior. Therefore, it is important for parents and teachers to provide effective motivation and constructive support. Motivation delivered without excessive pressure or burdensome demands can help students follow guidance and improve their disciplinary behavior. Through a more supportive and motivating approach, students are more likely to behave appropriately and demonstrate the expected level of discipline. Otherwise, students may become aggressive by rebelling against restrictions and inhumane treatment that they experience (Sulastri, 2017).

Self-Management Strategy for Improving Student Discipline Behavior at Al Mukhtar Junior High School

To address student indiscipline at Al Mukhtar Junior High School, the initial step taken by the school is to identify the problems faced by students. The school then adopts a guidance and counseling approach to explain to students the importance of disciplined behavior. In addition, the school regularly conducts socialization sessions regarding the disciplinary rules that apply within the school environment. In addressing the disciplinary behavior of Grade VIII students, the homeroom teacher begins the process by asking students directly about the violations they have committed. After identifying the type of violation, the homeroom teacher seeks solutions to resolve the problem. This process involves dialogue between the homeroom teacher and the students to understand the causes of the violations and identify effective ways to improve behavior. In addition, classroom management strategies that integrate self-management help reduce disruptive behavior while strengthening students' ability to follow school rules consistently (Nabila et al., 2026). Studies also show that self-management is closely related to students' motivation and learning strategies, where learners who regulate their behavior tend to achieve better academic outcomes (Zhu & Doo, 2022).

In addition to these measures, the researcher also plans to implement self-management strategies to improve students' discipline, particularly among Grade VIII students. This strategy aims to help students develop

the ability to regulate their own behavior, identify personal disciplinary goals, and implement concrete steps to achieve these goals. By integrating a self-management approach, students are expected to become more capable of controlling their behavior and complying with the disciplinary rules established by the school. Through the combination of guidance and counseling, disciplinary socialization, and the implementation of self-management strategies, the school is expected to become more effective in addressing student indiscipline and creating a more conducive learning environment. Furthermore, social and emotional competence development contributes significantly to student discipline, as individuals with strong self-management skills demonstrate better control over their actions (Bear & Soltys, 2020).

The use of self-management strategies to improve students' disciplinary behavior at Al Mukhtar Junior High School is a self-regulation method carried out by individuals without external coercion. Through this approach, students receive gradual guidance and are directed to improve their behavior when they make mistakes, with the goal of enabling them to independently change their own behavior. Self-management involves several important aspects, including self-monitoring, positive reinforcement, personal contracts, and stimulus control. In addition, this strategy includes planning, focusing attention, and evaluating activities with the assistance of counselors or school guidance and counseling teachers. Self-management was chosen because it motivates students to regulate changes within themselves and develop the behaviors expected of learners. This process does not produce immediate results; it requires more time and patience to transform students' behavior from being undisciplined to becoming more disciplined. This is because self-management depends on students' internal willingness to change, so without intrinsic motivation, behavioral change cannot occur effectively. Research also highlights that students with strong self-management and self-efficacy tend to demonstrate higher academic achievement and better discipline (Al-Abyadh & Abdel Azeem, 2022). In secondary education, self-regulation and self-management skills are essential for maintaining classroom discipline and academic success (Diaz, 2024).

At Al Mukhtar Junior High School, the self-management approach is implemented by developing a thorough understanding of each student. This includes understanding the problems students are facing and providing appropriate guidance through counseling services. Facilitators, namely counselors or school guidance and counseling teachers, play an important role in helping students become more open about their problems. In this way, the school can better understand the issues that contribute to students' lack of disciplinary behavior. Self-management at Al Mukhtar Junior High School is not merely about applying specific techniques but also about building positive and trusting relationships between students and facilitators. Through this approach, students are expected to identify and overcome the problems that hinder their discipline more effectively. With appropriate support and consistent guidance, students can more easily develop the expected disciplinary behavior (Suwanto, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The disciplinary behavior of Grade VIII students at Al Mukhtar Junior High School is still relatively low, as indicated by various forms of non-compliance with school regulations, such as arriving late at school, a lack of neatness in dressing, and low awareness in following school rules. This condition shows that disciplinary habits have not yet been fully developed within students. Changes in students' disciplinary behavior are strongly influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors include students' motivation, interests, and cognitive conditions, while external factors involve the family, school, and community environments, which play roles in shaping students' daily habits. These two factors interact with each other in influencing the process of behavioral change from being undisciplined to becoming more disciplined. To address this problem, a self-management strategy is implemented through guidance and counseling services conducted by school counseling teachers.

This strategy emphasizes students' ability to regulate, control, and evaluate their own behavior independently. However, the implementation of self-management strategies requires a considerable amount of time because behavioral changes do not occur instantly but through a continuous habituation process. Furthermore, the success of this strategy greatly depends on students' internal motivation without external coercion. Therefore, consistency in the implementation of guidance services is required to achieve optimal results.

This research contributes to the development of guidance and counseling services, particularly in the application of self-management strategies to improve student discipline. The findings of this study can serve as a practical reference for counseling teachers in effectively and sustainably developing students' disciplinary behavior at school. This research is limited to Grade VIII students in one school; therefore, the results cannot yet be widely generalized. In addition, behavioral changes require a long period of time, meaning that the measurement of outcomes remains temporary and depends on the consistency of strategy implementation. Future research is recommended to expand the subjects to several schools with different characteristics. Furthermore, various self-management techniques should be developed and long-term research methods should be applied to obtain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of changes in students' disciplinary behavior. Self-management strategies through guidance and counseling services have the potential to effectively improve student discipline; however, their success greatly depends on students' commitment, teachers' consistency, and continuous support from the school environment.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- Author 1 : responsible for conceptualizing the research, developing the research design, collecting data, analyzing findings, and preparing the initial manuscript.
- Author 2 : contributed to the research methodology, data validation, and critical review of the manuscript.
- Author 3 : responsible for supporting the literature review, providing academic input, and assisting in the interpretation of research findings.

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