

Group Guidance Strategies to Develop Social Skills in Adolescents: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The development of social skills in junior high school students is a vital component in fostering social-emotional competence, supporting academic achievement, and promoting long-term social adjustment. In light of the growing prevalence of social issues such as bullying, social anxiety, and limited healthy interactions within school environments, group guidance services must adopt more innovative, adaptive, and contextually relevant approaches. This urgency highlights the need for a systematic review of effective group guidance strategies aimed at enhancing students' social skills. This study aims to identify and evaluate innovative strategies in group guidance services through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The review analyzes peer-reviewed articles published between 2018 and 2024, sourced from reputable academic databases including Scopus, ERIC, and Web of Science. A thematic analysis approach is used to examine the effectiveness of various strategies, key components of service delivery, implementation contexts across countries, and their impacts on different dimensions of social skills. The findings reveal that strategies based on experiential learning, role-playing, interactive media, and collaborative activities significantly contribute to improving students' communication, empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution abilities. Furthermore, the results highlight the critical role of group structure, facilitator competence, and the integration of relevant theoretical frameworks in designing effective group guidance programs.

Keywords: *Group Guidance, Social Skills, Innovative Strategies, Systematic Literature Review*

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INTRODUCTION

Various social problems in school environments such as bullying, social isolation, and increasing levels of social anxiety among students have become pressing issues that hinder the development of healthy interpersonal relationships and a conducive learning climate. The development of social skills in students of Junior High School (SMP) is a fundamental aspect of character education and the formation of social-emotional competencies during early adolescence. Skills such as effective communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, and empathy serve as essential foundations for academic success and long-term social integration (Aini, 2022). In line with the growing prevalence of these social phenomena, the urgency to design effective and contextually relevant interventions has also significantly increased (Putri et al., 2025). Group guidance services, as an integral part of school guidance and counselling programs, hold great potential in fostering healthy social dynamics through collaborative and reflective learning experiences (Reith-Hall & Montgomery, 2023).

In recent years, digital transformation and the rise of social individualism due to excessive use of social media have created new challenges for the implementation of conventional counseling services. Middle school students, who are in a phase of social identity development, are now facing difficulties in establishing healthy and deep interpersonal relationships (Spain et al., 2017). While traditional group guidance services tend to focus on information delivery and structured discussions, current social conditions demand more

innovative strategies – both in terms of methods, approaches, and intervention media used. Recent literature also shows an increased interest in integrating culturally-based psychosocial approaches, digital technology, and experiential learning in group activities (Acai, 2021).

The main issue that underlies this study is the low effectiveness of conventional group guidance strategies in addressing students' social needs in a contextual manner. Many students exhibit obstacles in self-expression, assertive communication, and constructive conflict resolution. Despite being widely implemented, traditional approaches in group guidance often fail to foster active student engagement, particularly due to the lack of relevance of the content to their daily social experiences (Narzisi et al., 2024). Furthermore, there is still a gap between the design of group guidance curriculum and the facilitators' ability in the field to effectively and sustainably implement innovative strategies.

Several previous studies have attempted to address this issue by developing technology-based intervention models, social simulation methods, and arts-based activities. For example, (Reith-Hall & Montgomery, 2023) emphasizes the importance of micro-skills training in groups as a strategy to strengthen interpersonal skills. The study by (Acai, 2021) shows that arts-based creative activities have a positive impact on student participation and the enhancement of communication skills. However, most of these studies are partial, with a limited focus on specific contexts, and they neglect the diversity of the social backgrounds of middle school students. Another challenge is the lack of a comprehensive evaluation framework to assess the long-term effectiveness of the various strategies used.

Innovative solutions have been developed and tested on a limited scale in the context of secondary education. For example, (Warrier et al., 2024) highlights the value of peer-mediated learning group activities in strengthening students' social connections. A study by (Forsell et al., 2020) even recommends the use of structured group assessments to identify students' progress in mastering social skills. Experiential learning methods such as role-play, simulations, and narrative-based activities have proven to help students internalize social values in real-life-like situations (Putri et al., 2025). Despite this, these approaches have not yet been widely adopted in group counseling practices at junior high schools, and the variation in methodologies in previous studies makes it difficult to formulate a strategy map that can be implemented generally.

Several systematic reviews have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of social interventions, but most remain focused on the general adolescent population or students with special needs such as autism (Spain et al., 2017). The literature explicitly discussing innovative strategies in the context of group guidance at the junior high school level is still relatively limited. This creates a significant research gap, particularly in understanding how these approaches can be adapted to the social, cultural, and emotional contexts of students aged 12–15 years. The lack of systematic documentation of best practices in group guidance strategies also poses a barrier to the development of curricula and training for guidance counselors.

This research aims to fill that gap by conducting a Systematic Literature Review of various innovative strategies that have been implemented in group guidance at junior high schools. By systematically reviewing empirical studies from 2018 to 2024, this research aims to identify effective intervention patterns, assess their relevance and limitations, and offer evidence-based practical recommendations for the development of students' social skills. The focus on the SLR method enables a deep and comprehensive literature synthesis to map out the most promising approaches in the context of junior high education.

Thus, the main objective of this research is to systematically formulate various innovative strategies for group guidance that have been proven effective in enhancing the social skills of junior high school students, as well as to identify research gaps that remain open for further exploration. The novelty of this study lies in the systematic mapping of contextual, adaptive, and evidence-based approaches which have not been extensively outlined in previous literature. This study will include thematic analyses of the strategies, application contexts, and reported outcomes, as well as the limitations of existing interventions. The limitations of this research include only articles in English and Indonesian, a publication period from 2018 to 2024, and a focus on the population of junior high school



students, ensuring that the results are relevant for designing more adaptive educational policies and psych pedagogical interventions in the future.

The main problem in the development of social skills among junior high school students lies in the limited effectiveness of conventional group counseling programs in responding to complex and contextual social needs. Many students face barriers in communication, cooperation, and constructive conflict resolution, which indicates the need for a more innovative and adaptive approach in group counseling practices. Amid the social dynamics influenced by digitalization, rising individualism, and cultural diversity among students, group counseling services are required to adopt strategies that can encourage active engagement and the relevance of students' social experiences within the group.

To address this challenge, this research proposes a problem-solving approach based on Systematic Literature Review (SLR), which is a method of synthesizing literature that is conducted systematically, explicitly, and transparently. This approach enables researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize findings from various empirical studies related to innovative group guidance strategies in the context of junior high school students' social skills development. Through structured methodological steps including literature searches based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, data extraction, and thematic analysis. This study aims to generate a comprehensive understanding of practices of interventions that have proven to be effective while also revealing research gaps that have not been extensively explored.

A review of the state-of-the-art shows that in the last five years, there has been an increasing interest in integrating technology-based group guidance strategies (such as interactive digital media), experiential learning (such as simulations and role plays), and participatory approaches that involve students as active subjects in the social learning process. Studies published in reputable journals such as *School Psychology International* and *Journal of Counseling & Development* reveal that creativity-based and experiential strategies are more effective in activating students' emotional and interpersonal engagement compared to traditional instructional approaches. However, most of these studies are fragmentary, focus on specific local contexts, and have not adopted a systematic approach to mapping strategies.

The novelty of this research lies in its contribution to creating a systematic mapping of the innovative strategies of group guidance that have been empirically tested in the context of developing the social skills of junior high school students. Unlike previous studies that predominantly used experimental quantitative approaches or single case studies, this research offers a comprehensive evidence-based synthesis across contexts, which can serve as a reference in the development of policies, guidance service curricula, as well as training for guidance and counseling teachers. Thus, this research is expected to make a scientific contribution to strengthening the theoretical and practical foundations of innovative group guidance strategies that are relevant to the social needs of students today.

Based on this description, the problem formulations of this research are: (1) How can group guidance service strategies be designed to effectively enhance students' social skills? (2) What are the main components that must be present in group guidance services to address students' social barriers at school? (3) To what extent can prove group guidance approaches from various countries be adapted within the context of Indonesian education? (4) What is the impact of group guidance on the enhancement of social skill dimensions such as empathy, cooperation, communication, and conflict resolution? These problem formulations aim to direct the research to produce evidence-based, applicable strategies that have a direct impact on improving students' social skills. Thus, the results of this research are expected to be not only theoretical but also provide practical contributions to the implementation of guidance services in schools.

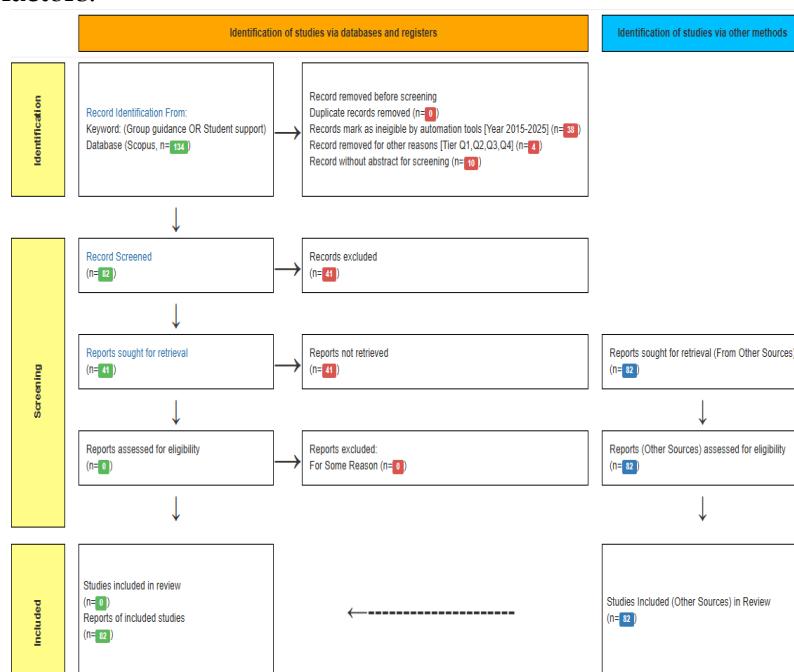
METHOD

This research uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, which is a method of synthesizing literature conducted systematically, explicitly, transparently, and replicable, aimed at identifying, evaluating, and comprehensively interpreting all relevant research



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evidence related to a specific research question (Kitchenham, Barbara, 2007). The selection of this method is based on the need to gain a comprehensive, in-depth, and evidence-based understanding of innovative strategies in effective group guidance to improve the social skills of junior high school (SMP) students. The research design is descriptive qualitative, applying the SLR protocol based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure transparency and quality in reporting. The literature search was conducted systematically using three reputable academic databases: Scopus, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), and Web of Science, which were selected due to their extensive collections of peer-reviewed educational and psychological research. The search employed a combination of keywords using Boolean operators, including: ("group guidance" OR "group counseling") AND ("social skills") AND ("junior high school" OR "adolescents") AND ("strategy" OR "intervention"). To ensure relevance and quality, several inclusion criteria were applied: (1) articles published between 2018 and 2024, (2) empirical studies with qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approaches, (3) studies focusing on group guidance interventions targeting social skills development in junior high school students or early adolescents (ages 12–15), and (4) articles published in English or Indonesian. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria included: (1) studies focusing solely on individual counseling, (2) research conducted at elementary or higher education levels, (3) theoretical or conceptual articles without empirical data, and (4) articles unavailable in full text (Afrianti et al., 2021). The article selection process involved title and abstract screening followed by full-text review based on the inclusion criteria. All selected studies were then analyzed thematically to extract key findings regarding intervention strategies, implementation components, target outcomes, and contextual factors.



The data sources used in this research are scientific articles obtained from five reputable academic databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. The literature search process employed Boolean syntax and a combination of keywords such as: "group guidance", "innovative strategy", "social skills", "middle school students", and "systematic review". These keywords were chosen to encompass the diversity of terms used across various disciplines such as education, psychology, and counseling.

Table 1. Inclusion Criteria and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Articles published within the period of 2018–2024.	Non-empirical articles such as opinions, editorials, or essays.
Empirical studies or systematic reviews discussing group guidance and social skills among junior high school students (ages 12–15 years).	Studies with non-JHS populations (for example, elementary or high school students)
Articles written in Indonesian or English.	Articles that do not explicitly study innovative strategies or intervention outcomes related to social skills
Peer-reviewed publications (scientific journals, conference proceedings, or accredited research reports)	Articles discussing conventional strategies without innovative elements in group guidance
Articles published within the period of 2018–2024.	The article involves a population beyond the junior high school level (for example, students and adults,

approach as developed by (Thomas & Harden, 2008). This technique allows researchers to identify the main themes that emerge from previous research related to innovative strategies and their impact on social skills. The process includes: (1) Open coding of the content of articles to mark important concepts. (2) Categorization of strategies based on methods, media, and psych pedagogical approaches. (3) Mapping general patterns in the effectiveness of strategies on students' social outcomes. (4) Literature gap analysis to identify unexplored areas. To ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis process, this study uses a data extraction template to record important information from each article, the PRISMA 2020 checklist as a reporting guide for the review results, and reference management software (Mendeley/Zotero) for systematic documentation (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

The results of this study will be presented in the form of a summary table outlining the population, strategies, and key findings, a comparison matrix of strategies based on approaches, effectiveness, and contexts of application, a thematic map of innovative approaches successfully implemented in middle schools, and recommendations for further research based on the identification of literature gaps.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the findings of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR), which have been grouped into thematic categories according to the type of strategy in group guidance services for developing social skills of junior high school students.

Experiential learning-based strategies emphasize learning through direct experience, reflection, and application in real-life social situations. This approach endeavors to proactively engage students in activities designed to stimulate social interaction, shared decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving. A multitude of activities, including outbound activities, group simulations, and collaborative projects, have been empirically validated as effective methodologies for enhancing students' social skills, particularly in regard to fostering cooperation and empathy (Narbito et al., 2022). Through direct engagement in contexts that replicate real-life social dynamics, students learn not only from the material presented but also from personal experiences and interactions with peers, ultimately strengthening the development of their social-emotional competencies.

The utilization of role-playing and social simulation strategies in educational settings entails the implementation of activities that involve students assuming specific roles in socially constructed scenarios. The objective of this exercise is to hone communication skills, conflict resolution, and empathy through direct experience in simulated social interactions. This pedagogical approach is designed to foster understanding of others' perspectives and to cultivate students' ability to articulate their own ideas with greater confidence. Research indicates that role-playing activities are effective in fostering students' understanding of others' perspectives and enhancing their assertive communication skills (Nurwahyuni

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Nurwahyuni & Siti Khadijah, 2025). Moreover, the employment of social scenarios pertinent to students' quotidian lives has been demonstrated to more effectively prepare them to confront authentic social challenges within the academic milieu, including the resolution of conflicts, collaborative group work, and interaction with diverse individual characters (Permatasari et al., 2022).

Interactive media and technology-based strategies employ digital tools and multimedia to deliver guidance materials in a more engaging, interactive, and easily understandable manner for students. This approach is designed to adapt to the characteristics of the digital generation, which has been shown to be more responsive to visual stimuli and technology. The efficacy of educational videos, games, and social simulation applications in fostering empathy and enhancing emotional intelligence in students has been demonstrated (RAHMA MODEONG et al., 2025). The visual media employed in this strategy has been demonstrated to facilitate students' comprehension of abstract concepts in social skills, including the recognition of emotional expressions, the development of appropriate responses in social situations, and the cultivation of social awareness. Moreover, the integration of technology facilitates a flexible and engaging guidance process, thereby increasing student motivation and active participation in each session.

Collaborative and reflective strategies underscore the significance of student engagement in activities that promote healthy social interactions and in-depth self-reflection. This approach is typically implemented through focus group discussions, teamwork, reflective journals, and peer feedback. The efficacy of this strategy in fostering social self-awareness, active listening skills, and the establishment of respectful relationships has been demonstrated (Irfan et al., 2020). Through collaborative discussions and introspection, students not only learn to understand others' opinions but also practice expressing their thoughts and feelings openly. These activities have been shown to indirectly foster a sense of social responsibility, strengthen bonds between individuals within the group, and create a more inclusive and supportive school environment.

An integrative strategy grounded in psychosocial theory constitutes an approach that is meticulously designed with reference to relevant theoretical frameworks, including social learning theory, the humanistic approach, and the solution-focused approach. The objective of this strategy is to integrate theoretical foundations with group guidance practices that are adapted to the developmental context of junior high school students. Research has demonstrated that integrating theory and practice has been shown to enhance the efficacy of interventions, particularly when tailored to the social-emotional needs of early adolescents (Lemberger-Truelove et al., 2020). The efficacy of this approach is contingent upon the consistency of the theoretical framework employed, the group's structure, and the facilitator's adeptness in implementing theoretical principles to group dynamics. Group guidance services, when supported by a robust theoretical foundation, exhibit enhanced levels of focus and systematicity. These services have been demonstrated to exert a lasting influence on the development of students' social skills.

The following presents 41 articles discussing Innovative Group Guidance Strategies for the Development of Social Skills in Junior High School Students. Detailed information about these articles can be found in Table 1, which includes the author's name, year of publication, article title, main findings, and the research questions discussed in each article.

No.	Authors & Year	Title	Main Findings	Relevance to QR
1	Crespi, Gustafson & Borges (2022)	Group Counseling in the Schools: Considerations for Child and Family Issues	Emphasizing the importance of structure and stages in the group guidance process in schools.	QR1
2	Hayes (2021)	Group counselling in schools: effective or not?	Group guidance allows students to develop social skills through interaction.	QR4
3	Hazel et al. (2019)	Group Social Skills Training with Adolescents	Effective group social skills training for adolescents from diverse backgrounds.	QR3

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4	Gerrity & DeLucia-Waack (2024)	Effectiveness of Groups in the Schools	Effective group guidance in enhancing students' social and academic skills.	QR4
5	Gresham (2022)	Social Skills Training with Handicapped Children: A Review	Social skills training helps the integration of children with special needs in public schools.	QR2
6	Whiston & Sexton (2019)	A Review of School Counseling Outcome Research: Implications for Practice	Group counseling improves students' academic and social outcomes.	QR4
7	Buser (2020)	Counselor Training: Empirical Findings and Current Approaches	Effective counselor training includes the development of interpersonal and cognitive skills.	QR1
8	Forsell, Frykedal & Chiriac (2023)	Group Work Assessment: Assessing Social Skills at Group Level	The importance of assessing social skills in the context of group work in education.	QR2
9	Weiss & Harris (2000)	Teaching Social Skills to People with Autism	Reviewing various effective strategies for teaching social skills to individuals with autism, including classroom-based interventions and pivotal response training.	QR1, QR4
10	Crespi (2024)	Group Counseling in the Schools: Legal, Ethical, and Treatment Issues in School Practice	Highlighting legal and ethical issues in group counseling in schools as well as effective service models.	QR2
11	McWhirter (1923)	Loneliness: A Review of Current Literature, With Implications for Counseling and Research	Discussing the relationship between loneliness and other psychological variables and its implications in counseling.	QR2
12	LeCroy (2019)	Social Skills Training with Adolescents: A Review	Evaluating social skills training programs for adolescents and their effectiveness.	QR1, QR3
13	Cermak & Aberson (2024)	Social Skills in Children with Learning Disabilities	Explaining social skills deficits in children with learning difficulties and appropriate intervention strategies.	QR2
14	Evans et al. (2000)	Effective School-Based Mental Health Interventions: Advancing the Social Skills Training Paradigm	Provide steps to enhance school-based social skills interventions.	QR1, QR3
15	White et al. (2007)	Social Skills Development in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Review of the Intervention Research	Summarizing research on group-based social skills training programs for children with ASD.	QR1, QR4
16	Srebnik & Elias (2022)	An Ecological, Interpersonal Skills Approach to Drop-Out Prevention	Proposing an ecological approach to prevent school dropouts through the development of interpersonal skills.	QR1, QR4
17	Rotheram-Borus et al. (2001)	Implementing a Classroom-Based Social Skills Training Program in Middle Childhood	Explain the institutional and organizational support, criteria for selecting trainers, and the training required for school counselors to implement and maintain the social skills training (SST) program for children.	QR1, QR2
18	Kunzi (2015)	Improving Social Skills of Adults With Autism Spectrum Disorder Through Physical Activity, Sports, and Games: A Review of the Literature	Highlighting that a lack of social skills in adults with ASD can lead to depression, anxiety, aggression, and physical health issues.	QR4

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19	Fisher et al. (2004)	Skills for Academic and Social Success: A School-Based Intervention for Social Anxiety Disorder in Adolescents	Describing the SASS program, a school-based intervention that emphasizes social skills and direct exposure for adolescents with social anxiety disorder.	QR1, QR3
20	Beauchemin et al. (2008)	Mindfulness Meditation May Lessen Anxiety, Promote Social Skills, and Improve Academic Performance Among Adolescents With Learning Disabilities	It shows that mindfulness meditation can reduce anxiety, improve social skills, and academic performance in adolescents with learning difficulties.	QR4
21	Kadish et al. (2022)	Counseling Juvenile Offenders: A Program Evaluation	Evaluating the effectiveness of counseling services provided by the Juvenile Counseling and Assessment Program (JCAP) in reducing delinquent behavior in adolescents.	QR2, QR4
22	Reith-Hall & Montgomery (2023)	Communication Skills Training for Improving the Communicative Abilities of Student Social Workers: A Systematic Review	Assessing the effectiveness of communication skills training to enhance the communication abilities of social work students.	QR2
23	Moote et al. (2022)	Social Skills Training With Youth in School Settings: A Review	Providing a critical overview and synthesis of current research practices involving social skills training (SST) with adolescents and pre-adolescents in educational settings.	QR1, QR3
24	Kurtz, Marshall & Banspach (2023)	Interpersonal Skill-Training Research: A 12-Year Review and Analysis	Reviewing a 12-year research on interpersonal skills training programs, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the research methodology used.	QR1, QR2
25	Brady (2021)	Social Skills Training for Psychiatric Patients, I	Reviewing the basic concepts and methods in social skills training for psychiatric patients, as well as the results of case studies and studies.	QR2
26	Randick & Dermer (2020)	The Relationship of School Art Therapy and the American School Counselor National Model	Comparing the latest literature on art therapy in schools with guidelines from the ASCA National Model shows that art therapy can meet the standards of school counseling programs.	QR2, QR4
27	Cook et al. (2018)	Social Skills Training for Secondary Students With Emotional and/or Behavioral Disorders: A Review and Analysis of the Meta-Analytic Literature	Synthesizing meta-analytic literature that evaluates the effectiveness of social skills training for high school students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders, showing improvement in two-thirds of the students compared to one-third in the control group.	QR1, QR4
28	Aspegren (2023)	BEME Guide No. 2: Teaching and Learning Communication Skills in Medicine	Filtering 180 articles related to teaching and learning communication skills in medicine, with assessment of article quality and focusing on randomized studies, open effect studies, and descriptive studies.	QR2
29	Monti & Kolko (2019)	A Review and Programmatic Model of Group Social Skills Training for Psychiatric Patients	Presenting a programmatic model for group social skills training for psychiatric patients, based on a literature review and clinical experience.	QR1, QR3

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30	Cho & Kim (2024)	The Effect of Virtual Reality Simulation on Nursing Students' Communication Skills: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis	It shows that virtual reality simulation significantly enhances the communication skills of nursing students, with an overall effect size of 0.44.	QR1, QR4
31	Akos, Hamm, Mack & Dunaway (2019)	Utilizing the Developmental Influence of Peers in Middle School Groups	Reviewing research on peer relationships and showing how the strengths of development in early adolescence are consistent and related to therapeutic factors in group work.	QR1, QR3
32	Spain & Blainey (2018)	Group social skills interventions for adults with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders: A systematic review	Group interventions can enhance social understanding, reduce loneliness, and psychiatric symptoms in adults with high-functioning autism.	QR1, QR4
33	Reichow & Volkmar (2020)	Social Skills Interventions for Individuals with Autism: Evaluation for Evidence-Based Practices within a Best Evidence Synthesis Framework	There is empirical evidence supporting various interventions to improve social behavior in individuals with autism.	QR1, QR2
34	McIntosh, Vaughn & Zaragoza (1992)	A Review of Social Interventions for Students with Learning Disabilities	Effective social skills training for students with learning difficulties, taking into account age, duration, and intervention model.	QR2, QR4
35	Acai, McQueen, McKinnon & Sonnadara (2024)	Using art for the development of teamwork and communication skills among health professionals: A literature review	Art-based approaches can enhance teamwork and communication skills among healthcare professionals.	QR1, QR4
36	Poynton et al. (2024)	Inclusion of Theory for Evidence-Based School Counseling Practice and Scholarship	Research shows that the integration of theory into counseling practice in students' social skills at school is important to enhance the effectiveness of services. Theory provides a systematic framework in designing relevant interventions.	QR1, QR2
37	Peach et al. (2021)	A scoping review of the role of LEGO therapy for improving inclusion and social skills among children and youth with autism	LEGO therapy has been proven to improve social skills such as cooperation, communication, and empathy in children and adolescents with autism through a play-based approach.	QR1, QR4
38	Wolstencroft et al. (2018)	Social Skill Interventions for Youth and Adults With Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review	Social skills interventions show positive results in improving social functioning in individuals with ASD.	QR1, QR3
39	Maag (2023)	Social Skills Training for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: A Review of Reviews	Social skills training produces moderate changes in the social competencies of students with emotional and behavioral disorders.	QR2, QR4
40	L. Webb, M. Lemberger (2018)	Helping Students Improve Academic Achievement and School Success Behavior	The Student Success Skills (SSS) intervention shows positive results in helping students develop social, emotional, and academic skills using an individual psychology approach. This program is designed in the form of structured group guidance.	RQ4

41	Gresham (2024)	Utility of cognitive-behavioral procedures for social skills training with children: A critical review	The Student Success Skills (SSS) intervention shows positive results in helping students develop social, emotional, and academic skills using an individual psychology approach. This program is designed in the form of structured group guidance.	QR1, QR2
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QR 1. How can group counseling service strategies be designed to effectively improve students' social skills?

The strategy of effective group guidance services in enhancing the social skills of junior high school students demands a systematic planning, stage-based implementation, and integration of approaches relevant to the developmental needs of adolescents. A study conducted by Crespi, Gustafson & Borges (2006) emphasizes the importance of clear structure and stages in the implementation of group guidance. They underline that group guidance services should be designed through a series of sessions that include the forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning phases. This strategy emphasizes that the group process has its own dynamics that must be managed professionally by the facilitator.

An effective program design also needs to pay attention to the developmental characteristics of students, by incorporating elements of participatory and reflective activities. In this context, experiential learning approaches, such as role-play, problem-based discussions, and interactive exercises are highly recommended because they encourage active participation and authentic social learning. As suggested by Poynton et al. (2017) in their previous findings, theory-based strategies such as social learning theory or solution-focused approach will enhance the focus of interventions and increase their potential success. Therefore, theoretically, contextually, and interactively designed group guidance service strategies prove to be more effective in fostering applicable and lasting social skills.

In order for group guidance service strategies to be truly effective, program design must be responsive to the social realities faced by students. In many cases, one-way approaches or those solely focused on content delivery have proven less successful in encouraging active participation and social behavior change. Therefore, contextual collaborative learning models such as group-based task learning are very important to implement. (Brigman & Campbell, 2003) through Student Success Skills (SSS) demonstrate that structured group-based programs designed with an individual psychology framework can enhance social skills as well as academic achievement. This is relevant to the needs of schools in Indonesia, which often separate social and academic guidance, even though these two aspects are interconnected.

In strategic design, there needs to be an integration between program objectives, the methods used, and the expected outcomes. Each guidance session should have behavioral indicators that want to be developed, such as an increase in the frequency of students speaking in groups, improved listening skills when others are speaking, or the success of students in resolving minor conflicts through group mediation.

Reflective activities such as journaling, peer feedback, and group discussions about personal experiences are very helpful for students to internalize social values. Furthermore, the strategies should also be inclusive by engaging all students, not just those who have prominent social issues. This helps to foster a more supportive and relational school culture.

QR2. What are the main components that must be present in group guidance services to address students' social barriers at school?

Some key components that must be present in group guidance services include: a clear group structure, supportive facilitation techniques, a curriculum or modules based on students' social needs, and a continuous monitoring and evaluation system. Gresham's study (1981) in (Trunekova & Viney, 2008) shows that systematic social skills training can improve the social integration of students with physical disabilities or special needs. This reinforces the finding that group guidance should be complemented by a differential approach based on the needs of both individuals and target groups.

The next component is the competence of the facilitator. The guidance teacher must be equipped with training in building positive group dynamics and the ability to apply innovative strategies such as reflective discussion, social simulation, and educational games. In addition, the existence of a group agreement, measurable goals, and reflective evaluation sessions at the end of meetings are important supporting elements in maintaining the direction and engagement of participants. The adoption of theoretical frameworks also serves as an important foundation. As explained by (Brigman & Campbell, 2003) through the Student Success Skills (SSS) program, strategies designed with an individual psychology approach and structured group formats significantly enhance students' interpersonal, emotional, and academic skills. This indicates that the effectiveness of services lies not only in the content of the material but also in the implementation process.

QR3. To what extent can the tested group guidance approach in various countries be adapted in the context of education in Indonesia?

Many group guidance approaches that have been developed and tested abroad actually have great potential to be adapted in the context of Indonesian education, provided that the adaptation process considers cultural factors, local values, and the characteristics of Indonesian students. The study by Hazel et al. (1985) in (Azizovna et al., 2024) on Group Social Skills Training with Adolescents shows the success of social group training in improving social responses among adolescents in various educational settings. Although this study was conducted in Western countries, the principles used, such as open communication models, group-based activities, and behavior-based evaluations, can be modified to align with the social norms in Indonesia that tend to be collective and oriented towards social harmony.

Likewise, (Levy & Dunsmuir, 2020) in their study on LEGO therapy showed that collaborative activity-based strategies are very effective in enhancing social inclusion, empathy, and communication in children with autism. Considering the facilities, curriculum, and the capabilities of facilitators, such approaches can be applied in Indonesian schools as part of guidance programs for both special needs and general students. However, to adapt foreign approaches to the Indonesian context, it is important to conduct initial pilot studies and adjust the language, values, and evaluation systems to ensure the results are valid and relevant. In addition, collaboration between counselors, teachers, and parents is crucial to bridge the different contexts of home and school.

QR4. What is the impact of group guidance on the improvement of social skills dimensions such as empathy, cooperation, communication, and conflict resolution?

Various research findings consistently show that group guidance significantly contributes to the development of four main dimensions of social skills: empathy, cooperation, communication, and conflict resolution. (Nnen, 2024) emphasizes that group guidance allows students to express their feelings, listen actively, and respond to social situations more empathetically. Practices such as sharing experiences and role-playing create a safe space for students to develop an understanding of others' perspectives (Taylor et al., 2018).

The research by (Delucia-waack, 2006) supports this finding by showing that the effectiveness of group counseling includes an increase in more co instructive interpersonal interactions. Group activities encourage students to develop teamwork, negotiate, and make joint decisions. Moreover, group dynamics provide a real social experience that accelerates the internalization of positive social values and norms.

The study by (Taylor et al., 2018) also highlights that training methods for communication skills through simulated patients and role-play are very effective in developing listening skills, appropriate responses, and managing interpersonal conflict. This strategy is highly relevant to be applied in group counseling services aimed at enhancing the interpersonal communication skills of middle school students, both in academic contexts and in their everyday social lives. The reviewed research shows that group counseling has an impact on four main dimensions of students' social skills.

Empathy

Empathy Through reflective activities and open interactions, students are trained to understand the feelings of others and to see from different perspectives. Role-playing and peer

feedback allow for emotional experiences that strengthen empathy. (Cahyono et al., 2020) emphasizes that group experiences create a natural context for learning to respond to emotions appropriately.

Cooperation

Students are trained to work in teams, support each other, and complete tasks together. Programs like SSS and LEGO therapy demonstrate that collaborative skills significantly improve in a safe and structured environment. This is important for students who tend to be dominant or passive in conventional study groups.

Communication

One of the main benefits of group guidance is the improvement in verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Students learn active listening, assertively expressing ideas, and constructively responding to conflicts. (Delucia-waack, 2006) emphasize the effectiveness of social simulation in boosting speaking confidence.

Conflict Resolution

Through reenacted conflict scenarios and reflective discussions, students learn to resolve differences in a non-violent manner. Conflict mapping techniques and restorative dialogue can be used to explore the roots of conflicts and alternative solutions. The research by (Delucia-waack, 2006) supports these findings by affirming the increase in prosocial behaviour post-intervention.

CONCLUSIONS

The primary contribution of this study is to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based understanding of innovative strategies in group guidance services to improve the social skills of junior high school students. This study identifies four key dimensions of social skills that can be effectively developed through group guidance: empathy, communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Another significant contribution lies in the emphasis on a robust theoretical foundation, including social learning theory and a humanistic approach, complemented by participatory methods such as role-play, social simulations, and group discussions. This study also demonstrates that elements such as an organized group structure, facilitator competence, and a well-planned evaluation system are crucial to the success of the intervention. Moreover, the present study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by underscoring the viability of adapting international approaches, such as Student Success Skills and LEGO therapy, to the Indonesian educational context. Consequently, the findings of this study offer a direct contribution to the advancement of guidance and counseling practices within educational institutions. Furthermore, they encourage the development of educational policies that are more attuned to students' socio-emotional requirements. In addition, the study provides a strategic framework for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers, facilitating the continuous enhancement of the efficacy of group guidance services.

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