

# IS GROUP GUIDANCE WITH PROBLEM SOLVING TECHNIQUE EFFECTIVE IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' LEARNING INDEPENDENCE?

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to know the effectiveness of group guidance using problem-solving technique to increase students' learning independence in junior high schools. The type of research conducted in this study is an experiment with a pre-experimental research design, utilizing the one-group pretest-posttest design model. The sample was determined using simple random sampling, consisting of a total of ten students. The data collection instrument used was a learning independence scale. Data analysis was performed using the paired sample test. The results of this study indicate that group guidance using problem-solving technique is effective in enhancing students' learning independence. The findings of this research can serve as a technical solution for guidance and counseling services for guidance and counseling teachers in their efforts to increase students' learning independence in junior high schools.*

**Keywords:** learning independence, group guidance, problem solving techniques,

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## INTRODUCTION

Students possess various potentials that can be developed. They are unique individuals with diverse characteristics, each having different talents, potentials, interests, and creativity, all of which should be nurtured to promote individual independence (Simonton, 2000). Based on this explanation,

it is important to recognize that, in addition to having potential that needs to be developed, a student's independence is equally significant. Independence helps students make decisions and take responsibility.

Independence is often associated with actions that are not entirely determined by

others and are carried out based on the individual's initiative (Ryan & Deci, 2006). Students who exhibit independence tend to have a desire to learn using their own abilities, which means they do not always seek help from others. This independence can be beneficial in fostering self-confidence, making it easier to understand learning material, and positively impacting the formation of the student's character, ultimately leading to personal growth (No. et al., 2018; Astuti & Rozikin, 2024; Musawir et al., 2023; Pham & Thu, 2024).

Independent learning is an activity based on students' desire to learn autonomously, without being influenced by their surrounding environment or other people. This activity encourages students to take responsibility for facing learning challenges. Independence in learning is typically directly proportional to student learning outcomes. This is supported by research from Sobri & Moerdiyanto (2014), which states that independent learning has a positive influence of 21.2% on student learning outcomes. Additionally, research conducted by Rijal & Bachtiar (2015), shows that there is a contribution of 33.5% from students' learning independence to biological cognitive learning outcomes. According to Knowles (Amalia et al., 2022), students who exhibit independence in learning are fully responsible, take the initiative in determining their learning needs, create their own goals, choose and apply effective and efficient learning strategies, and are able to evaluate or assess their learning outcomes. If low learning independence does not receive attention, especially from guidance and counseling teachers, it will negatively affect learning activities. This aligns with the opinion of Laia et al. (2022), which states that students who lack independence in their learning tend to be passive, embarrassed, and afraid to express their opinions when faced with problems, often relying on others to solve their issues.

Group guidance is a service in the field of guidance and counseling that is particularly suitable for adolescents. It is a method that focuses on activities conducted in a group

setting, providing information or experiences through organized planning (Majdi & Ekawati, 2020). Group guidance, utilizing a variety of techniques, has been proven effective in increasing students' learning independence (Adzkiyah et al., 2022; Fitriani, 2019; Hidayati, 2013; Rohima, 2018). Yanda et al. (2022), found that group guidance using problem-solving techniques can improve academic intelligence among junior high school students. According to Suharman (Rosidah, 2016), problem solving is a process individuals engage in when facing challenges in life, involving the search for and identification of solutions. Based on this, the aim of this research is to test the effectiveness of group guidance using problem-solving techniques to enhance students' learning independence in junior high schools. The results of this research can serve as a technical solution for guidance and counseling services, assisting guidance and counseling teachers in their efforts to increase student learning independence in junior high schools.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The type of research conducted in this study is an experiment utilizing a pre-experimental research design, specifically the one-group pretest-posttest design model. The sample was determined using simple random sampling, consisting of a total of ten students from Junior High School 2 Banguntapan. The data collection instrument employed was a learning independence scale. Data analysis was performed using the paired sample test.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The implementation of group guidance services using problem-solving techniques to increase learning independence for ten eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Banguntapan was conducted over six meetings. Each meeting consisted of an opening stage, a transition stage, a core stage, and a closing stage.

The core stage focused on implementing problem-solving strategies, which included: 1) identifying a clear problem to be solved; 2) gathering data or information that can be used

to address the problem; 3) determining a temporary solution to the problem; 4) testing the validity of the temporary solution; and 5) drawing conclusions. The topics covered in the group guidance sessions over the six meetings were: 1) discussing and examining the nature of independent learning; 2) "Grow Up Your Confidence"; 3) "Be an Independent Student"; 4) "Use Your Time for Good Activities"; 5) "Responsible Student"; and 6) "Using Other References."

To assess the effectiveness of the group guidance services provided, student learning independence was measured before the services were implemented and after the problem-solving technique group guidance sessions were completed. Based on data analysis, there was an increase in student learning independence scores, with a pre-test mean score of 131.6, which falls in the medium category. After the treatment, the average score increased to 163, placing it in the high category. The pretest and posttest scores can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Differences in Student Learning Independence Scores Before and After Being Given Problem Solving Technique Group Guidance Services*

Name	Pretest	Posttest	Gain
RMA	104	159	55
RSL	131	177	46
DFNA	95	154	59
AJ	160	173	13
NSH	139	151	12
ADP	148	156	8
DAEK	98	151	53
NAA	145	171	26
YAJ	163	178	15
MRRA	133	160	27

In the aspect of Working Alone, there was an increase in the average item score of 0.67. In the aspect of Respecting Time, the average item score increased by 0.64. In the Responsibility aspect, there was an increase of 0.57 in the average item score. Finally, in the aspect of Having a Desire to Compete, there was an increase of 0.52 in the average item score.

The data results indicate that the highest mean item score in the pretest for student learning independence was in the Responsibility aspect, with a score of 2.80,

while the lowest was in the Working Alone aspect, with a score of 2.26. In the posttest, the highest mean item score remained in the Responsibility aspect at 3.11, and the lowest was still in the Working Alone aspect, which increased to 2.93.

Examining the change in the average item score for each aspect reveals that the highest average gain was in the Working Alone aspect, with an increase of 0.67, while the lowest average gain was in the Having a Desire to Compete aspect, with an increase of 0.52. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.  
*Difference in Mean of Student Learning Independence Items Before and After Being Given Problem Solving Technique Group Guidance Services*

No.	Aspect	Mean Pretest	Mean Posttest	Gain
1	Self-confident	2,38	2,96	0,58
2	Work alone	2,26	2,93	0,67
3	Value Time	2,47	3,11	0,64
4	Responsibility	2,80	3,37	0,57
5	Have the desire to compete and advance	2,63	3,15	0,52

Furthermore, based on the data analysis of each aspect of student learning independence, 93 is evident that all aspects show improvement. In the self-confidence aspect, there was an increase in the average item score.

Additionally, the test of the effectiveness of problem-solving technique group guidance to increase student learning independence using the Paired Sample T-Test formula. The results of the effectiveness test for the group guidance services indicate a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.001. Since this value is less than 0.05, we accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and reject the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ), indicating that there is a significant change between the pretest and posttest scores. Therefore, it can be concluded that "group guidance using problem-solving techniques is effective in increasing the learning independence of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Banguntapan." The results of the service effectiveness test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.  
*Paired Samples Test*

Paired Samples Test												
		Paired Differences						Sig. (2-tailed)				
		Mean	Std. Dev iation	Std d. Err or Me an	95% Confiden ce Interval of the Differenc e		t		df			
					Lower	Upper						
Pre test	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
P ai r 1	Pos t t e s t e s	31. 40 0	19.9 40	19. 94 0	45. 66 4	17. 13 6	4. 98 0	9	.0 01			

Providing group guidance services using problem-solving techniques is an effort to enhance learning independence by addressing external factors. This aligns with Basri's opinion (as cited in Yasdar & Mulyadi, 2018), which states that learning independence can be influenced by exogenous or external factors.

The description above explains that group guidance can help prevent issues related to learning independence that may disrupt a student's developmental process. This is consistent with the views of Gibson and Mitchell (Rosidah, 2016), who assert that group guidance is an effort to assist individuals in a group setting, focusing on providing information or experiences through planned or organized activities. The goal is for individuals to understand themselves, prevent problems, improve themselves, and achieve optimal development.

Furthermore, the use of problem-solving techniques in group guidance helps group members increase their learning independence. This is because problem-solving techniques involve analyzing a problem, proposing solutions, and making decisions regarding the most appropriate solution to implement. This aligns with Rosidah (2016), assertion that problem-solving techniques aim to guide students in critical thinking, analytical thinking, reflective thinking, developing reasoning skills in the problem-solving process, and making informed decisions.

The results of this research are further supported by observations made during the group guidance sessions using problem-solving techniques. Observations indicated that from the first meeting to the sixth, the ten students participating in the group guidance service experienced an increase in their average scores, placing them in the active category. This demonstrates that all group members engaged well throughout the service, from the initial stage to the final stage.

In addition to comparing pretest and posttest scores, the researchers also tested the hypothesis by examining the significance values. The obtained value was 0.001, which is below the significance level of 0.05. This indicates the rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, the results of this research can be concluded as follows: group guidance using problem-solving techniques is effective in increasing the learning independence of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Banguntapan.

The findings of this research are consistent with previous studies conducted by Idayanti et al. (2022), which demonstrated that group guidance services using problem-solving techniques can enhance student learning motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic at SMP Negeri 2 Palembang. This was confirmed through hypothesis testing with the Z-test, where the Z-count value was 2.677 and the Z-table value was 2.007. Since  $Z\text{-count} \leq Z\text{-table}$  ( $2.677 \leq 2.007$ ),  $H_a$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected, indicating an increase between the pretest and posttest scores. While Idayanti's research focused on increasing learning motivation, the current study aimed to enhance learning independence. Additionally, Idayanti used the Wilcoxon Test for hypothesis testing, whereas the researchers employed the Paired Sample T-Test.

Moreover, research by Khoiruniisa (2020), found that group guidance using problem-solving techniques effectively increased self-control among ninth-grade students at MTs Muta'allimin Cadasari, Pandeglang. This was confirmed through the Wilcoxon Signed

Ranks Test, which yielded a significance result of 0.026, indicating that the result was still  $< 0.05$ . Thus,  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted, with an increase in scores from a pretest of 28% to posttest results of 65%. While Khoiruniisa's research focused on self-control, the current study concentrated on enhancing learning independence.

Additionally, Rosidah (2016), conducted research demonstrating that group guidance services using effective problem-solving techniques improved the self-adjustment of isolated students at Pringsewu State MTs. This was evidenced by a significance result of 0.001, which is below  $\alpha = 0.05$  ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ), leading to the rejection of  $H_0$  and acceptance of  $H_a$ . There was also a significant increase in pretest and posttest scores, particularly in the average scores between the experimental and control groups. While Rosidah's research focused on improving the adjustment of isolated students, the current study aimed to enhance learning independence.

Based on several previous studies, it is evident that they have successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of group guidance utilizing problem-solving techniques in addressing various issues. The research conducted by the current researchers also confirms that group guidance using problem-solving techniques is effective in increasing student learning independence.

### CONCLUSION

The results of this research indicate that group guidance using problem-solving techniques is effective in enhancing students' learning independence across all indicators. These findings can serve as a technical solution for guidance and counseling services, assisting guidance and counseling teachers in their efforts to promote student learning independence.

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