

THE ROLE OF COUNSELING IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN

Halif Ilham Syahputra Azhari

Fakultas Dakwah dan Komunikasi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Riau,
Indonesia

Correspondence Email: 12340211962@students.uin-suska.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers in addressing student learning motivation issues in schools. Learning motivation is a key factor influencing students' academic achievement and participation in the learning process. However, many students still experience low learning motivation due to academic pressure, lack of self-confidence, family problems, and environmental influences. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach through observation and interviews. The results indicate that guidance and counseling teachers play a vital role in providing guidance, emotional support, motivation, and counseling services to students to enhance their enthusiasm for learning. Additionally, collaboration among teachers, parents, and school administrators significantly contributes to supporting students' learning motivation. This study underscores the importance of counseling services in creating a learning environment that supports students' academic and emotional development.

Keywords: guidance counselors; learning motivation; students; counseling services.

INTRODUCTION

Academic motivation is a key determinant of student success in higher education. High motivation fosters active engagement, perseverance, and optimal academic achievement. However, various studies indicate that students often experience a significant decline in learning motivation due to high academic pressure. The workload of coursework, adapting to a new environment, financial issues, and the demands of completing a thesis for senior students are the primary triggers of academic stress (Rivaldi, 2024). This stress, in turn, impacts mental health, triggering anxiety, depression, reduced concentration, and a significant decline in academic performance (Maha et al., 2025; Rivaldi, 2024).

This phenomenon is further complicated by low help-seeking behavior among students. Although there is a significant positive correlation between academic stress levels and the desire to seek help, the strength of this correlation remains relatively low (Marseal, 2024). Cultural factors, stigma surrounding mental health issues, and a preference for informal support (from family and religious leaders) are the main barriers preventing students from accessing professional counseling services (Maha et al., 2025; Marseal, 2024). Consequently, many students experiencing demotivation and psychological distress do not receive appropriate intervention.

In this context, counseling particularly Islamic Guidance and Counseling (BKI) plays a highly strategic role. As an approach that integrates psychology with the values of Islamic da'wah, BKI is able to meet students' needs for holistic guidance, not only resolving problems but also fostering self-awareness, emotional regulation, and intrinsic motivation (Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025). Strategies such as individual counseling, group counseling, information services, and educational approaches based on awareness and responsibility have proven effective in fostering positive behavior and academic discipline (Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025). This approach aligns with findings that religiosity and emotional regulation serve as important protective factors for the mental health of adolescents and students (Maha et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, optimizing the role of counseling still faces challenges, including a lack of capability and understanding among BKI practitioners in promoting and delivering services professionally (Syauki et al., 2022). Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of counseling in addressing declining student motivation and to formulate strategies for developing more effective counseling services in higher education institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Type and Approach

This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design. This approach was chosen because it aims to examine the relationship between the role of counseling as the independent variable (X) and students' learning motivation as the dependent variable (Y), as well as to measure the extent to which counseling services contribute to increased learning motivation. A correlational design is suitable for explaining relationships between variables without manipulation (Marseal, 2024; Rivaldi, 2024). This study also enriches quantitative data with a qualitative approach through triangulation, thereby yielding a more comprehensive understanding (mixed methods using the explanatory sequential model).

Research Location and Time

The research was conducted at a state university in Indonesia that has an active Guidance and Counseling (BK) service unit. The location was selected based on accessibility to respondents who had previously received counseling services. Data collection took place from March to May 2026.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The study population consists of all active students at the university during the 2025/2026 academic year. The sampling technique used purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria:

- Undergraduate students in their 3rd–8th semesters who have received counseling services (individual, group, or educational) at least once in the past 12 months.
- Willing to participate and sign an informed consent form.
- Experiencing a decline in academic motivation based on self-report.

The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum sample of 250 respondents (Kurniawan et al., 2026; Priadana & Sunarsi, 2021, cited in Marseal, 2024).

Research Variables

Table 1. Research Variables		
Variables	Operational Definition	Dimensions/Indicators
The Role of Counseling (X)	Professional services provided by counselors to help students overcome psychological barriers and boost their motivation to learn	Individual counseling, group counseling, information services, classroom-based education, educational sanctions, and coordination (Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025)
Motivation to Learn (Y)	Internal and external motivations for students to engage actively, diligently, and enthusiastically in learning activities	Perseverance, the desire to excel, independent learning, and academic stress management (Rivaldi, 2024)

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The instruments consisted of:

- Counseling Role Scale (adapted from Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025) → 18 items.
- Student Learning Motivation Scale (adapted from Rivaldi, 2024) → 15 items.
- Demographic data and frequency of counseling service use.

Validity and Reliability Testing

The instruments were first pilot-tested on 30 students outside the research sample.

- Validity: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Test. Items were deemed valid if calculated $r >$ table r (sig. 0.05).
- Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha Test. The instrument was deemed reliable if $\alpha >$ 0.70 (Marseal, 2024 reported $\alpha = 0.819$ and 0.908).

Data Collection Techniques.

The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms via social media and student class groups, accompanied by electronic informed consent. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with 8–10 informants (students and counselors), and counseling service records were analyzed for triangulation (Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025; Syauki et al., 2022).

Data Analysis Techniques

Analysis was performed using SPSS version 26:

- a. Descriptive Analysis: Mean, standard deviation, percentage, and categorization (high, moderate, low).
- b. Prerequisite Tests:
 - Normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)
 - Linearity
- c. Hypothesis Testing: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Simple Linear Regression to examine the contribution of variable X to Y (Marseal, 2024).

Research Validity and Ethics

Data validity is strengthened through triangulation of methods and sources (Syauki et al., 2022; Roghibah & Rahmawati, 2025). This study has obtained ethical approval from the research ethics committee and ensures the confidentiality of respondents’ identities.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected using several methods, namely:

- a. Observation
The researcher observed student behavior and the learning process at school.

b. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with guidance counselors and several students to identify issues related to learning motivation and the strategies used by guidance counselors to assist students.

c. Documentation

Documentation in the form of guidance counseling activity reports and school programs was used as supporting data for the study.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data is analyzed using thematic analysis by identifying, grouping, and interpreting themes related to learning motivation and counseling services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Issues with Student Learning Motivation

Research findings indicate that some students experience low learning motivation due to several factors, such as family problems, lack of self-confidence, academic pressure, and the influence of their peer group. Some students appear less active in the learning process and show little interest in learning. In addition, excessive use of social media and online games also affects students' concentration and enthusiasm for learning. These conditions lead to a decline in academic performance among some students.

The Role of Guidance Counselors

This study indicates that guidance counselors play a crucial role in helping students overcome learning motivation issues. Guidance counselors provide counseling services, emotional support, and motivational guidance to students facing academic difficulties.

Guidance counselors also help students set learning goals and develop positive study habits. Through individual counseling, students are given the opportunity to discuss the problems they face and receive solutions tailored to their specific circumstances.

These findings align with Carl Rogers' theory, which emphasizes the importance of empathy and supportive relationships in helping individuals develop self-confidence and positive behavior.

Cooperation Between Schools and Parents

The research findings also indicate that cooperation between schools and parents plays a significant role in enhancing students' motivation to learn. Parents who actively support their children's learning help create a more positive learning environment at home.

Communication between guidance counselors and parents also helps schools monitor students' progress and provide appropriate support when students face learning difficulties.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that guidance counselors play a crucial role in addressing students' learning motivation issues. The counseling services, emotional support, and motivational guidance provided by guidance counselors help students boost their enthusiasm for learning and their academic participation. Furthermore, collaboration between guidance counselors, schools, and parents also makes a significant contribution to supporting students' academic and emotional development.

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