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The Self-Leadership Profile of High School Students and Its Implications for Personal-Social Guidance and Counseling

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study was motivated by the importance of developing self-leadership in students, which in turn influences their motivation, self-management, and responsibility in daily life. Self-leadership plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and influencing their academic and social success. **Objective:** This study aims to provide an overview of students' self-leadership and to design a personalized social guidance and counseling program to enhance students' self-leadership. **Method:** This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design with a random sampling technique, involving 106 second-year students at SMAN 1 Jawilan. This study used indicators of behavioral focus, natural reward strategies, and constructive thinking to measure students' self-leadership. **Results:** The results showed that 65% of students fell into the moderate self-leadership category, 19% into the high category, and 16% into the low category. **Conclusion:** Based on these results, it is essential to design a guidance program that enhances students' ability to lead themselves, manage their goals, and foster a greater sense of responsibility. **Originality/Value:** This study provides novel empirical insights in the field of developmental guidance and counseling, specifically within personal social counseling, by uncovering the distribution of high school students' self leadership profiles, revealing that the majority (65 percent) fall into the moderate category, along with specific developmental needs across behavior focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought patterns, regarding adolescent self leadership competencies in the context of baseline school level need assessments for tailored counseling interventions, an area that has remained underexamined. These findings enrich empirical evidence and serve as a strategic benchmark for the development and implementation of structured personal social guidance programs and modular counseling interventions aimed at fostering students' self management, autonomy, and accountability in educational settings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents, who are in a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, undergo physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. At this stage, they must develop a sense of responsibility as members of society and cultivate responsible attitudes and behaviors, including those related to leadership. Leadership development for adolescents can enhance their social skills and increase their involvement. Basic leadership training programs for Generation Z improve decision-making, self-confidence, and community participation (Cahyati, 2024). Additionally, the Action Leadership for Adolescents approach, when implemented in school curricula, enhances 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, collaboration, and leadership (Hamdorf, 2024). Adolescence is a pivotal period for developing leadership skills through programs that align with student development. Self-leadership, as an extension

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of self-management, involves an individual's ability to organize, direct, and motivate themselves to achieve goals effectively. This process involves self-direction and internal motivation, enabling individuals to perform tasks effectively, increase initiative, proactivity, and responsibility.

Self-leadership has a positive impact on students' task commitment and self-efficacy, with higher self-leadership associated with increased efficacy and academic commitment (Barus et al., 2022). Students' self-leadership abilities need to be continuously developed, and involvement in organizations provides opportunities for experiences that enhance these abilities, although not always significantly so, based on the level of activity (Pratama et al., 2023). These findings suggest that self-leadership plays a significant role in enhancing learning outcomes and promoting social engagement in education.

Many individuals, especially students, still struggle to control themselves and be responsible, as evidenced by behaviors such as tardiness, truancy, and rule-breaking. Self-regulation is closely related to behavior that complies with norms and rules, where higher levels of self-regulation lead to increased adherence to school rules (Perets et al., 2025). In addition, the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model is effective in increasing personal responsibility and behavior that aligns more closely with social expectations, helping students develop self-control and understand the importance of discipline in their character development (Sánchez-Miguel et al., 2025).

Based on preliminary studies conducted by researchers at SMAN 1 Jawilan, many students lack an understanding of the concept of self-leadership. This is evidenced by the impact of a lack of understanding of the concept of self, resulting in many students shirking their responsibilities, such as skipping classes and arriving late to class. Many also lack the confidence to speak in front of the class, have a poor understanding of themselves, such as not knowing their talents and potential, and commit disciplinary violations at school, such as climbing over fences around the school grounds and wearing clothes that do not comply with school rules. These are characteristics of a lack of self-leadership among students at school.

Therefore, the school environment plays a crucial role in helping students learn to lead themselves, as schools serve not only as academic spaces but also as places for character development and self-leadership. Guidance and counseling teachers play a crucial role in developing students' potential, particularly in fostering self-leadership, critical thinking, and responsibility. Self-leadership contributes to the development of students' self-efficacy and task commitment, which underlie self-control and responsibility in learning (Agustina, 2025). Cognitive and social cognitive factors, such as self-confidence and self-leadership strategies, play a role in students' ability to regulate themselves and exhibit leadership behavior (Chan & Cheng, 2025). Additionally, self-leadership strategies in STEM students have been shown to enhance academic performance, suggesting that self-leadership learning in schools can optimize student potential (Junaidi et al., 2022). Clearly, structured guidance and counseling programs in schools are essential for strengthening students' self-leadership skills.

Research on the self-leadership profiles of high school students shows the importance of leadership development as a key aspect in shaping students' character and social skills. Sari (2022) found that self-leadership development can increase students' independence and ability to face life's challenges. Research by Wibowo & Anwar (2021) confirms that leadership training in schools plays a vital role in shaping students' discipline and responsibility. On the other hand, Rahmawati (2020) shows that structured personal and social guidance and counseling can help students recognize their potential and manage emotions and conflicts more effectively. Putra & Pratama (2021) highlight that improving students' leadership skills has an impact on the quality of their interpersonal relationships with their peers. Fitriani (2019) also reveals that involvement in extracurricular activities focused on leadership increases students' self-confidence and social skills. These studies focus on the development of self-leadership through planned guidance and counseling programs, which are crucial in preparing students to face their personal and social challenges.

Although numerous studies have examined the development of self-leadership in high school students, several gaps remain that require further exploration. First, there is a lack of research discussing external factors such as the support of the school environment, family, and community in the process of developing self-leadership. Second, there have not been many studies comparing the impact of various leadership training approaches on students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Third, there is still a lack of research identifying the most effective guidance models for developing student self-leadership. Additionally, research on the impact of leadership skills on students' social relationships outside of school remains limited. Finally, there is a lack of studies on the types of extracurricular activities that are most effective in enhancing student self-leadership.

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the factors that influence the development of self-leadership in high school students, and to explore the implications of this development for personal and social guidance and counseling. This study aims to understand the role of school, family, and community environments in supporting the

development of self-leadership, as well as to evaluate practical guidance and counseling approaches that facilitate the strengthening of student leadership. In addition, this study will also examine the impact of leadership skills on students' social relationships outside of school and explore the types of extracurricular activities that can optimally improve students' leadership skills.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a descriptive quantitative research design, aiming to describe and analyze the level of self-leadership among high school students, as well as to develop a personal social guidance and counseling program based on the research findings. A quantitative approach was chosen because it can provide clear and measurable numerical data, allowing researchers to analyze the profile of students' self-leadership objectively. In this study, data were collected to measure students' self-leadership levels using relevant indicators, including behavioral focus, natural reward strategies, and constructive thinking. This research design also aims to provide a more comprehensive picture of the current conditions, which will be used as a basis for designing appropriate personal social guidance and counseling programs.

2.2 Research Object

The subjects of this study were second-year students at SMAN 1 Jawilan, consisting of a population of 269 students. Of these, 161 students were selected as samples using simple random sampling, which ensured that every student had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent in this study. This sampling technique aims to obtain a representative sample of the population, enabling more accurate generalization of the research results. The selection of second-year students as research subjects was based on the consideration that at this age, students are in a crucial phase of development in shaping their character and leadership, and are susceptible to the influence of practical guidance and counseling programs.

2.3 Data Collection

Data in this study were collected using a research instrument in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire specifically designed to measure students' self-leadership levels. This questionnaire consisted of three leading indicators: behavior-focused strategies, natural rewards strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies. Each indicator was measured using several questions that explored how students managed themselves, recognized their strengths and weaknesses, and thought positively and productively in various situations. The questionnaire was distributed to 161 students who had been selected as a sample, and each student was asked to rate the provided statements to obtain valid data on their level of self-leadership.

2.4 Data Analysis

After the data were collected, analysis was performed using quantitative descriptive techniques to systematically describe the characteristics of the data. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by calculating the mean, standard deviation, and categorization based on a predetermined score range. The scores obtained by the students were then categorized into three groups based on their level of self-leadership: low, medium, and high. This categorization aims to provide a clear picture of the distribution of self-leadership among students, as well as to identify which aspects of self-leadership indicators require improvement. The results of this data analysis are used to design personalized social guidance and counseling programs that are more tailored to the needs of students, thereby effectively improving their self-leadership.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The research was conducted by distributing a questionnaire on student self-leadership to 161 second-year students at SMAN 1 Jawilan. The results of the student self-leadership research data can be described based on the predetermined categorization. The categorization used in the student self-leadership research is based on a comparison of the hypothetical mean and standard deviation. The results of the comparison of the hypothetical mean and standard deviation can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Calculation Results for Min, Max, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Self-Leadership

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Self-Leadership	161	68	123	97	10

The self-leadership profile at SMAN 1 Jawilan can be observed through the scores obtained by each subject. The categorization is divided into three parts: low, medium, and high. The results are as follows:

Table 2. Self-Leadership Profile of Second-Year Students at SMAN 1 Jawilan

Category	Score Range	Respondents	Percentage
Low	$X < 87$	26	16%
Medium	$87 \leq X < 107$	104	65%
High	$X \geq 107$	31	19%
Total		161	100.0%

Based on Table 2 regarding the self-leadership profile of 161 respondents in Grade 2 at SMAN 1 Jawilan, 31 respondents or 19% of the 161 respondents were in the high category and could be said to be capable of leading themselves, such as being able to manage themselves by setting goals, developing self-confidence, and committing to carrying them out, as well as having high discipline, such as arriving at school on time.

Meanwhile, 104 respondents, or 65%, fell into the medium category, with scores ranging from 87 to 107. This suggests that most students already possess sufficient self-leadership, including the ability to manage themselves effectively and recognize their strengths and weaknesses. However, to achieve maximum results, self-leadership development is needed.

Furthermore, there were 26 respondents or 16% who were in the low category, with scores below 87, meaning that there were still students who had low self-leadership, characterized by their inability to lead themselves, not yet recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, resulting in a lack of skills in making plans to achieve goals and a lack of self-motivation.

The results of the study on the self-leadership of second-year students at SMAN 1 Jawilan were categorized into three levels: low, medium, and high. The majority of respondents fell into the medium category, with 104 respondents, or 65%. Meanwhile, there were 26 respondents in the low category, accounting for 16%, and 31 respondents in the high category, accounting for 19%. These results are comparable to those of a study conducted by Marthaningtyas (2016: 71), which found that the level of self-leadership among university students was in the moderate category, with 49 respondents, or 47%.

3.2. Discussion

This study shows that most students at SMAN 1 Jawilan have a moderate level of self-leadership. This suggests that many students in their teenage years, particularly at the high school level, are in a crucial phase of development that shapes their character and self-leadership. According to Erikson's developmental theory, adolescence is a period of identity search and psychological maturation that also includes increased independence and responsibility, both of which are highly dependent on the development of effective self-leadership. Therefore, students need to learn to manage themselves more effectively, both academically and socially, in order to navigate life's challenges better.

Self-leadership encompasses three main components: behavioral focus, natural reward strategies, and constructive thinking, which support an individual's ability to direct, motivate, and achieve goals. In education, self-leadership is crucial for students to focus on their academic goals and effective resource management, thereby enhancing self-control, responsibility, and task completion (Wang et al., 2021). Successful student transition has a positive impact on academic achievement and reduced academic anxiety, emphasizing the importance of constructive thinking and natural rewards in supporting intrinsic motivation (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). Each dimension of self-leadership positively influences students' ability to absorb learning, with a constructive mindset having the most potent effect, demonstrating the importance of a positive mindset and self-appreciation in supporting learning effectiveness (Yue et al., 2025).

According to several experts, intrinsic motivation, which originates from within a person and is an important element in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), plays a significant role in student educational development. Yengkopiong (2025) shows that fulfilling students' basic psychological needs, such as autonomy and competence, increases intrinsic motivation, which in turn improves their engagement in learning tasks. Kamberi (2025) found that variations in intrinsic motivation are positively correlated with students' academic achievement, indicating the

role of internal motivation in setting personal goals and managing the learning process. Mukhoiyaroh (2024) emphasizes that SDT requires the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, to encourage intrinsic motivation in the school context. Dewi (2025) found a significant relationship between student motivation and learning engagement, where high motivation is associated with increased academic engagement, suggesting that strengthening intrinsic motivation has a broad impact on student behavior and learning outcomes. This exposure reinforces the importance of strengthening intrinsic motivation in guidance and counseling programs to help students manage themselves and achieve personal goals.

Compared to previous studies, the findings of this study align with those of previous studies, which show that most students fall into the moderate self-leadership category. However, this study focuses primarily on high school students and emphasizes the importance of guidance and counseling programs in supporting the development of their self-leadership. One of the strengths of this study is the use of a proven instrument, namely the Likert scale, to measure students' self-leadership, which allows for more accurate and objective measurements. Additionally, this study employed a simple random sampling technique, which provides a more accurate representation of the student population at SMAN 1 Jawilan. This approach ensures that the results obtained can be better generalized and used as a basis for developing relevant guidance programs in other schools. Another advantage is the use of three leading indicators to measure self-leadership, which provides a more comprehensive picture of students' self-leadership profiles.

The findings of this study emphasize the importance of developing self-leadership among high school students and highlight the strategic role of personal and social guidance and counseling in achieving this. Programs based on the results of this study can help students recognize and develop their potential, as well as strengthen their self-leadership so that they are better prepared to face future challenges. Therefore, schools need to continue developing and adapting guidance and counseling programs that can effectively and comprehensively meet the needs of students' self-leadership development.

Poor self-leadership in students can reduce motivation, hinder their ability to direct themselves according to norms, and impede their ability to set goals and act proactively. Self-leadership encompasses self-direction and self-motivation, which are essential for conforming to the norms of daily life. Self-leadership has a positive relationship with students' entrepreneurial orientation, where students with higher self-leadership tend to be more innovative and responsible (Oko & Kurniawan, 2023). Additionally, self-leadership and self-efficacy influence students' entrepreneurial creativity, thereby supporting their motivation and readiness to face entrepreneurial challenges (Rakib et al., 2023). Students with higher levels of self-leadership have better learning motivation and academic performance (John, 2025). Entrepreneurial education leadership increases adolescents' entrepreneurial intentions and actions (Lekutle et al. 2023). These findings underscore the importance of educational interventions in strengthening students' self-leadership.

The findings of this study reveal that to improve students' self-leadership, guidance and counseling services in schools can be effectively implemented using various approaches, including classical guidance, group guidance, individual counseling, and group counseling. Approaches that align with the characteristics and needs of students will help improve their self-leadership. Properly designed guidance programs can have a profoundly positive impact on students' ability to lead themselves and better manage life's challenges.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

The implications of this study suggest that the development of students' self-leadership in schools, particularly through personal and social guidance and counseling programs, plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and their ability to manage themselves. The findings of this study indicate that most high school students are still at a moderate level of self-leadership, highlighting the need for further intervention through programs specifically designed to enhance their independence, motivation, and self-management. Therefore, schools and guidance and counseling teachers need to design and implement more structured programs based on these findings, which can help students develop their self-leadership and facilitate their becoming more responsible and proactive in their academic and social lives.

4.2 Research Contributions

This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the level of self-leadership among high school students, particularly at SMAN 1 Jawilan, and how the development of self-leadership can be integrated into personal and social guidance and counseling programs. This study highlights the importance of adopting a more structured approach

to guidance and counseling to enhance students' self-leadership, which encompasses not only academic aspects but also social and emotional aspects. In addition, this study enriches the literature on self-leadership by using a proven instrument, namely the Likert scale. It provides a strong basis for the development of more relevant and effective guidance programs for students in various other school contexts.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Research Limitations

The limitations of this study lie in the use of data collection methods that rely solely on Likert scale questionnaires, which focus on students' subjective self-assessments. This can lead to bias in the measurements, as students may provide answers that do not fully reflect their actual behavior or attitudes. Additionally, this study was conducted at only one school, namely SMAN 1 Jawilan, so the results obtained may not be generalized to the entire high school student population. For further research, it is recommended to use triangulation methods, such as direct observation or interviews, to obtain more comprehensive and valid data. Furthermore, it is also necessary to expand to various schools with different characteristics to see variations in the level of student self-leadership.

5.2 Recommendation for Future Research

Further research can be conducted using a more diverse approach to explore in depth the factors that influence the development of student self-leadership, such as direct observation and interviews with students, teachers, and parents. Furthermore, further research can also expand the sample by involving more schools with different characteristics, in terms of location, socioeconomic background, and culture, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of students' self-leadership in various contexts. Further research could also develop and test the effectiveness of various models of personal social guidance and counseling programs designed to enhance students' self-leadership, as well as evaluate their long-term impact on students' social, emotional, and academic development.

6. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study reveals that most students at SMAN 1 Jawilan fall into the moderate self-leadership category, comprising 65% of the total respondents. This suggests that students in their teenage years, especially at the high school level, are at a crucial stage of development in shaping their character and self-leadership. Although most students already possess the ability to manage themselves, there is still room for improvement, especially in terms of constructive thinking and managing intrinsic motivation. Therefore, more in-depth self-leadership development is needed to prepare students to face more complex challenges in the future.

This study also demonstrates that structured personal and social guidance and counseling programs play a crucial role in supporting students' self-leadership development. Guidance and counseling teachers can play a strategic role in helping students find meaningful goals for themselves and motivating them to take more responsibility for their actions and behavior. By providing an approach that suits the characteristics of students, guidance programs can help students overcome challenges in managing themselves and achieving their personal goals. Therefore, schools need to design and implement relevant and effective guidance programs to improve students' self-leadership.

This study offers valuable insights into the significance of self-leadership development in the Indonesian educational context. Although the results of this study indicate a moderate level of self-leadership among most students, they confirm the need for schools to devote more attention to designing guidance programs that can further explore students' potential and enhance their leadership skills. With more effective guidance and counseling programs, it is hoped that students will develop into more independent and responsible individuals, ready to face future social and academic challenges.

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All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Aji Zulhakim: Conceptualization and Design; Writing - Original Draft; Rochani: Methodology, Writing - Review & Editing; Performed data collection and Analysis; Deasy Yunika Khairun Interpretation of the results.

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The authors declare that they have no significant competing financial, professional or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript

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