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Self-Injury Behavior: Prevention Through True Stories E-Biblioeducation

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Abstract Self-injury is a maladaptive behavior among adolescents, intentionally performed to reduce emotional distress without suicidal intent. This study aimed to develop real-life story–based e-biblioeducation media in the form of a digital flipbook as a preventive and reductive intervention against self-injury behavior among junior high school students. Real-life story–based e-biblioeducation is considered effective because it facilitates emotional identification, reflective thinking, and vicarious learning through authentic narratives, enabling adolescents to internalize adaptive coping strategies. The study employed the ADDIE model. Participants were 15 eighth-grade students at SMP Shalahuddin Malang selected through random sampling. Research instruments included expert validation sheets and a self-injury scale. Validation results indicated that the media was feasible, with scores ranging from high to very feasible across expert reviewers. Effectiveness testing using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test yielded a Z score of −3.302 (p < 0.05), indicating a significant reduction in self-injury behavior. Although limited by a small sample size and the absence of a control group, the findings suggest that real-life story–based e-biblioeducation is a promising alternative for preventive school counseling and warrants further investigation using larger samples and experimental designs.

Keywords: Self-Injury; E-Biblioeducation; Real Stories; Prevention

INTRODUCTION

Self-injury behavior, or harming oneself without suicidal intent, has become an increasingly prevalent psychological issue among adolescents, particularly at the junior high school level. The American Psychiatric Association (Association, 2013; Widyaningrum and Putri, 2024) defines non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) as the deliberate act of harming oneself to relieve emotional or psychological distress without the intention of committing suicide. This phenomenon is commonly found in various countries, including Indonesia. Research (Malumbot, Naharia and Kaunang, 2020) shows that 18.7% of adolescents in East Java have committed mild forms of self-harm, such as cutting their skin or hitting themselves, due to academic pressure and poor social relationships. Similar findings were reported by (Handayani, Hidayat, Putriani, *et al.*, 2024; Handayani, Hidayat, Yendi, *et al.*, 2024) that self-injury often occurs and is commonly experienced by adolescent girls as a negative coping mechanism for feelings of anxiety, guilt, and low self-esteem, as well as a channel for expressing feelings of anger, frustration, or despair.

From a developmental perspective, adolescence is characterized by intense emotional transitions and a high need for social acceptance (Santrock, 2018). When adolescents fail to find social support and healthy emotional regulation mechanisms, they tend to seek emotional release through self-destructive behaviors (Burešová, Vrbová and Čerňák, 2015). For example, research (Morgan *et al.*, 2017; Xiao *et al.*, 2022; Trafford *et al.*, 2023) in the UK found that self-injury has doubled in the last decade, especially among adolescent girls experiencing academic and social pressure. Prolonged academic pressure can cause individuals to feel depressed and experience high levels of stress (Permatasari, Latifah and Pambudi, 2021), often leading to self-injury.

Based on field data obtained at Shalahuddin Junior High School in Malang, approximately 16.1% of students have engaged in self-injury due to being victims of bullying (Handayani, Hidayat, Yendi, *et al.*, 2024), Social pressure, such as students experiencing culture shock (Permatasari and Sari, 2023), where students also experience anxiety in communicating with their friends (Croucher *et al.*, 2015; Malo, Sari and Permatasari, 2025), can trigger misunderstandings that lead to bullying at school. Furthermore, the results of the needs assessment show that 48.4% know that their friends have committed self-injury either at school or outside of school, and more than 50% stated that they need educational media to understand and prevent such behavior. This fact confirms that self-injury is not an individual phenomenon, but a shared problem that requires serious attention from schools, counselors, and families.

Research in Indonesia highlights that school counseling services still face major challenges, such as fragmented management, weak evaluation, and limited technology integration. This results in low detection of self-injury behavior among students, as they are reluctant to seek help due to stigma, lack of access, and limited resources (Melasti, Ramli and Utami, 2022; Hidayati, Fanani and Mulyani, 2023; Lakadjo *et al.*, 2025). Studies also show that most students who engage in self-harm do not report their behavior for fear of negative reactions or being seen as attention seekers (Hidayati, Fanani and Mulyani, 2023; Nurendah, Maslihah and Zakariyya, 2023). Guidance counselors often face limitations in media and communication strategies relevant to the characteristics of the digital generation (Generation Z). Therefore, an innovative approach is needed that can integrate digital media, emotional literacy, and reflective approaches in the prevention of self-harming behavior.

One relevant approach is bibliotherapy education, which is the use of reading materials to help individuals understand themselves and develop adaptive behaviors (Shechtman, 2019). Bibliotherapy is the use of reading materials (stories, books, or other written materials) in the therapeutic process to help individuals understand personal problems, express emotions, and find adaptive solutions. Through identification with story characters, children and adolescents can relate their own experiences, develop insights, and learn coping strategies indirectly, so that they feel safer and less threatened (Betzalel and Shechtman, 2010, 2017; Shechtman, 2019).

A study by (Lasan, 2018) in Indonesia proved that bibliotherapy education is effective in increasing students' self-awareness of the psychological problems they experience. In addition, research by (Publications *et al.*, 2017; Pedrini *et al.*, 2022) proved that the use of bibliotherapy educational media in group services can reduce aggressive behavior and improve emotional regulation in junior high school students. Other studies show that bibliotherapy, both in groups and individually, is effective in reducing aggressive behavior (Castillo-Eito *et al.*, 2020) and anxiety (Yuan *et al.*, 2018), and increasing empathy (Aziz *et al.*, 2025) and social adjustment in children and adolescents (Watts and Piña, 2023; Mendoza and Taylor, 2024). Bibliotherapy-based interventions are also proven to be more effective when conducted in small groups, as group discussions encourage emotional exploration, peer support, and a sense of togetherness. In addition, bibliotherapy can be used as a preventive method in the classroom or as part of intensive counseling. This was followed by research by , which proved that biblioeducation media can strengthen students' self-esteem (Avci and Kuzu, 2025), while (Yuan *et al.*, 2018) emphasized its effectiveness in increasing students' cognitive awareness. However, most previous studies still used traditional print media, which is not suitable for the needs of the digital generation. E-biblioeducation innovation allows for the integration of text, images, videos, and reflection sheets into a single digital platform that is more interactive and accessible.

The development of digital technology has opened up new opportunities for the implementation of bibliopedagogy in the form of e-bibliopedagogy. This model not only combines narrative text, but also adds visual, interactive, and reflective elements through a digital flipbook format. A study by (Park & Kim, 2023) in Korea shows that the use of digital storytelling can significantly increase empathy and emotional awareness in adolescents. In Indonesia, research by (Mutmainah & Saputra, 2024) found that e-biblioeducation developed in an interactive flipbook format successfully increased self-awareness and reduced self-harming behavior among junior high school students.

Thus, the development of e-biblioeducation media based on real stories is a strategic step to strengthen preventive counseling services in schools. Real stories have greater emotional power than fiction because they reflect the social reality of students and foster a sense of self-identification (Fede, 2021). The integration of digital

literacy and psychopedagogical approaches in this media is expected to provide a reflective space for students to understand, manage, and channel their emotions positively.

Based on the background and literature review above, this study aims to develop real-story-based e-biblioeducation media in digital flipbook format as an effort to prevent self-injury behavior in junior high school students; determine the feasibility of the media through expert validation (material, media, language) and prospective users; and analyze the effectiveness of the media in reducing self-injury behavior through empirical testing. This objective is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of a technology-based preventive counseling service model, as well as practically to guidance counselors in providing more innovative, attractive, and digitally generation-appropriate services.

METHOD

This study uses a research and development (R&D) approach with the aim of producing an innovative product in the form of e-biblioeducation media based on real stories as a means of preventing self-injury behavior in junior high school students. The development model used is ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation), which is considered most relevant for designing technology-based media because it emphasizes a systematic process from needs analysis to product effectiveness evaluation (Branch, 2009; Molenda, 2015). This approach allows researchers to combine theoretical aspects of counseling guidance with innovative digital-based practices to produce products that are conceptually and empirically tested (Hastjarjo, 2022).

The research design is descriptive-quantitative, with the main procedures consisting of two major stages, namely the media development stage and the effectiveness testing stage. The development stage begins with a needs analysis of the phenomenon of self-injury through initial observation, Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers, as well as the distribution of questionnaires to students to identify preventive service needs. The results of the analysis showed a high need for psychoeducational media that is interesting and relevant to the characteristics of digital teenagers. Based on these findings, the researchers designed media in the form of a digital flipbook containing real stories about students who experienced self-injury, accompanied by value reflections, psychoeducational knowledge, and moral messages. The data sources in this study included two categories, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from expert validation and student responses to the developed media. The validation was carried out by four groups of experts: subject matter experts, media experts, language experts, and prospective users (counselors and students). Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from scientific literature, previous research results, and relevant theories that formed the conceptual basis for media development, including bibliotherapy theory (Shechtman, 2019), multimedia learning theory (Mayer, 2021), and preventive counseling approaches (Corey, 2012).

Data collection techniques were carried out using several systematically designed instruments. First, student and guidance counselor needs questionnaires were used in the analysis stage to identify the need for preventive digital media. Second, expert validation sheets were used to assess the suitability of the content, language, and appearance of the media based on a four-point scale (1–4). Third, a self-injury behavior scale was used to measure the effectiveness of the media before and after the intervention. This scale was developed based on (Walsh's, 2012) theory and has been adapted to the psychosocial context of Indonesian adolescents, with high reliability ($\alpha = 0.88$) based on preliminary testing. In addition, the researchers also used student reflection sheets to assess changes in awareness and understanding after participating in digital bibliotherapy activities.

The trial process was conducted using a One Group Pretest–Posttest design, in which students were given a self-injury scale before and after using the e-biblioeducation media. The activity was carried out in three group counseling sessions, each lasting 60 minutes, facilitated by a guidance counselor. During the intervention process, students were invited to read real stories in flipbooks, watch short reflection videos, and engage in group discussions and self-reflection on the emotional experiences that arose. This approach was designed to enable students to identify themselves, regulate their emotions, and develop awareness of the consequences of self-injury behavior (Walsh, 2012; Park & Kim, 2023).

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive and nonparametric inferential approaches. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the results of expert validation, prospective user responses, and student reflective responses. Meanwhile, inferential analysis was performed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test because the data were not normally distributed and the sample size was relatively small (Pallant, 2020). This test was used to determine the difference in self-injury behavior scores before and after treatment. Qualitative data from expert comments and student reflections were analyzed using content analysis techniques (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020), providing a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the media in empirical and psychopedagogical contexts.

With this methodological approach, this study not only measures the quantitative impact of the intervention but also reveals the dynamics of changes in student behavior and self-awareness qualitatively. The comprehensive analysis results are expected to strengthen the role of guidance and counseling in integrating digital technology into preventive services in schools, in line with the demands of the Society 5.0 era, which emphasizes collaboration between humanistic and technological aspects (Setyowati et al., 2022).

RESULTS

This study resulted in an innovative digital-based learning media and counseling service called e-biblioeducation based on real stories. This media was developed with the main objective of preventing and reducing self-injury tendencies among junior high school students, particularly at Shalahuddin Junior High School in Malang. This product is packaged in the form of a digital flipbook that combines non-fiction narrative text, visual illustrations, reflective videos, and self-reflection activities. The development of the media was based on the results of a needs analysis which showed that most students had a fairly high level of emotional pressure and needed educational tools that were more communicative, interactive, and contextual to their social reality.

Based on the validation results conducted by four groups of experts, the e-biblioeducation media was declared suitable for use in the context of preventive guidance and counseling services as shown in Table 1. Media experts gave an average score of 0.81 in the high category, material experts gave a score of 1.00 in the very high category, language experts gave a score of 3.62 in the very feasible category, and prospective users consisting of guidance counselors and students gave a score of 3.62, which was also in the very feasible category. These findings indicate that the media meets all aspects of feasibility, in terms of substance, language structure, and visual appearance.

Table 1. Validation Recapitulation from the Experts

Judgement	Dimension	Score	Category
Media Expert	Design Quality & Interactivity	0,81	High
Counseling Expert	Relevance & Structure	1	Very High
Language Expert	Readability	3,62	Very High
User	Practically	3,62	Very High

These validation results reinforce (Mayer, 2024) view that the quality of service media is determined by its ability to simultaneously integrate the cognitive and affective elements of learners. Attractive visualizations, intuitive layouts, and easy-to-understand narratives are key to facilitating students' emotional engagement. During the field trial phase, the developed real-life story–based e-biblioeducation media was implemented through three structured treatment sessions conducted within a school counseling setting. Each session was designed to facilitate guided reading of authentic narratives presented in a digital flipbook, followed by reflective discussions and emotional processing activities led by the school counselor. The intervention was delivered over a two-week period, allowing students sufficient time to engage cognitively and emotionally with the content. Prior to the intervention, students completed a pretest using a self-injury behavior scale, and the same instrument was administered again after the completion of the treatment sessions as a posttest.

From the field trial results, data showed a significant decrease in self-injury behavior tendencies after students participated in digital bibliotherapy activities. Statistical test results using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

showed a Z value of –3.302 with a p-value < 0.05, which means there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores for self-injury behavior.

DISCUSSION

Descriptively, students showed an increase in self-awareness, emotional reflection skills, and understanding of the psychological consequences of self-harming actions. In addition, students also reported that the real stories presented in the media provided inspiration and a deep sense of empathy because they described experiences that were relevant to their own lives.

In the context of a one-group pretest–posttest design, the internal validity of this study was maintained through several procedural control strategies. First, the use of the same instrument at the pretest and posttest stages ensured consistency in measuring changes in self-injury behavior, so that any differences in scores could be attributed to the treatment given. Second, the e-biblioeducation intervention based on real stories was implemented within a relatively short and controlled time frame (two weeks with three structured sessions), thereby minimizing potential threats to internal validity such as the history effect and maturation. During this period, there were no other counseling programs or external interventions directly related to self-injury issues provided to participants, so that the observed behavioral changes were more likely to be caused by the research treatment.

In addition, the threat of testing effect was minimized by providing sufficient time between the pretest and posttest and by ensuring that the scale items were not explicitly discussed during the intervention sessions. This was done so that participants did not simply remember their pretest answers, but truly reflected on changes in their understanding and emotional experiences after participating in the digital bibliotherapy activity. The consistency of the treatment implementation procedures—from the presentation of real stories, facilitation of reflection, to guided discussions—also contributed to an increase in internal validity, as each participant received a relatively equivalent intervention experience.

However, a single-group design without a comparison group still has limitations in completely eliminating threats to internal validity, particularly regarding the possibility of unmeasured external factors. Therefore, the results of this study should be understood as preliminary evidence regarding the effectiveness of real-story-based e-bibliotherapy.

These empirical findings show that bibliotherapy-based digital media can serve as an effective psychoeducational tool in changing students' behavior and perceptions of themselves. This is in line with the results of research by (Huang and Lin, 2018), which proves that interactive e-bibliotherapy can increase junior high school students' self-awareness and empathy towards mental health issues. The results of this study also support the Bibliotherapy for Adolescents theory proposed by (Shechtman, 2019), which states that reading real stories that describe a person's emotional struggles can evoke strong emotional resonance, enabling readers to engage in reflection and catharsis more effectively.

Theoretically, the effectiveness of this media can be explained through the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2024) approach, which states that the learning process will be more meaningful when information is presented in a multimodal form, namely through a combination of text, visuals, and audio, because it is able to activate multiple cognitive pathways in the brain. In the context of this study, narratives in the form of real stories activate the verbal pathway, while illustrations and reflective videos activate the visual and emotional pathways of students. These two pathways work simultaneously to build deeper conceptual understanding and empathy. Thus, e-biblioeducation is not only a means of conveying information, but also a reflective tool that harmoniously integrates cognitive and affective dimensions.

Furthermore, from a psychological perspective, changes in student behavior can be understood through Bandura's (1997) theory of self-regulation, in which individuals can control their behavior through the mechanisms of self-observation, self-assessment, and self-reaction. In this digital bibliotherapy process, students observe real stories that describe the process of recovery from self-injury, assess their relevance to personal experiences, and then internalize the positive values of the characters in the story. This process gives rise to reflective awareness that encourages emotional regulation and adaptive decision-making.

In addition to supporting existing theories, this study also enriches the literature by providing new contributions related to the integration of bibliotherapy and digital media approaches in the context of guidance and counseling. These findings show that digital media not only functions as a means of communication but also as a therapeutic space that allows for reflective interaction between students and educational content. Thus, this research can serve as the basis for developing a new model called the "Digital Bibliotherapy Model," which is a narrative-based preventive counseling approach packaged in an interactive and multimodal format. This model is in line with the idea of technological humanism in the Society 5.0 era, which emphasizes the use of technology to support human psychological well-being (Setyowati et al., 2022).

In relation to previous research, these results reinforce the findings of Park and Kim (2023) in Korea, which revealed that digital storytelling has a significant influence on increasing empathy and emotional awareness in adolescents. The findings of this study are also in line with Fede's (2021) study, which states that real stories have a stronger transformational power than fiction because readers can more easily identify with authentic experiences. Thus, it can be concluded that e-biblioeducation media based on real stories is not only effective in a psychoeducational context, but also has a profound transformative value in shaping students' awareness and behavior.

These results and discussions explicitly answer the research questions and problems, namely that (1) e-biblioeducation media based on real stories is suitable for use in the context of preventive counseling services in schools; and (2) this media has been proven effective in reducing the tendency for self-injury behavior among junior high school students. This finding also confirms that the use of digital-based media in the context of counseling guidance not only increases the effectiveness of affective learning but also expands the scope of counseling guidance services to be more participatory and in line with the characteristics of Generation Z.

The findings of this study also provide significant practical contributions to the development of the guidance and counseling profession in schools. Guidance counselors can utilize this digital flipbook media as a preventive intervention tool in group and classroom services. Through reflective reading activities, students are encouraged to understand the emotional consequences of their actions, develop empathy for themselves and others, and build healthy emotion management strategies. Institutionally, the use of e-biblioeducation also supports the national education transformation policy based on technology and the strengthening of character education as announced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemendikbudristek, 2023).

Thus, the results of this study not only confirm the effectiveness of digital media as a preventive service tool but also emphasize the importance of technology-based innovation in building emotional literacy and psychological well-being among students. The integration of humanistic approaches, digital technology, and biblioeducation theory produces a new synthesis in school guidance and counseling practices that are more adaptive, reflective, and transformative.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that e-biblioeducation media based on real stories has proven to be feasible and effective for use as an innovation in preventive guidance and counseling services in schools. Through the ADDIE model-based development process, the resulting digital flipbook product successfully met the feasibility standards in terms of content, media, language, and usefulness for users. The validation results show that this media is not only visually appealing and interactive, but also capable of conveying psychoeducational messages in language that is appropriate for adolescent development. Empirically, the test results show a significant decrease in self-injury behavior tendencies after students interacted with the media, which means that this intervention is effective in increasing students' self-awareness and emotional regulation skills.

These findings reinforce that the bibliotherapy approach developed in a digital format based on real stories has great potential as a relevant psychoeducational strategy in the digital age. The integration of digital literacy, nonfiction narratives, and self-reflection makes this media not just an information tool, but also a reflective tool that encourages the internalization of positive values. Theoretically, this study confirms the principles of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2024) and expands the application of bibliotherapy for adolescents (Shechtman, 2019) in the context of technology-based learning. Thus, this study produces a new

construct in the form of a Digital Bibliotherapy Model—an intervention counseling model based on digital narratives that integrates cognitive, affective, and reflective aspects into a unified emotional learning process.

In addition to providing theoretical contributions, this study also has strong practical implications. Guidance and counseling teachers can adapt this media as an efficient, accessible, and generation Z-friendly group or classroom service tool. The use of digital flipbooks allows counselors to implement more engaging and meaningful preventive services without requiring complex technological infrastructure. The results of this study are also in line with the national digital-based education transformation policy (Kemendikbudristek, 2023), which emphasizes the importance of pedagogical innovation to strengthen the character and psychological well-being of students.

Thus, the main conclusion of this study is that the development of e-biblioeducation based on real stories not only functions as an effective psychoeducational medium in preventing self-injury, but also as a form of digital technology integration in humanistic counseling practices in schools. This product is a tangible representation of counseling that is adaptive to the times, inclusive of student needs, and oriented towards long-term psychological well-being.

Based on the research results and implications discussed, several recommendations can be proposed in the context of practice, theory development, and further research. Practically, guidance and counseling teachers are advised to utilize e-biblioeducation media based on real stories as an alternative preventive service that can be applied in group or classical guidance. This media can be integrated into school well-being programs, digital emotional literacy, or reflective classes to help students understand themselves and manage stress adaptively. For optimal implementation, schools need to provide simple technological support such as computers, projectors, or adequate internet access. In addition, training for BK teachers in digital media management and reflective mentoring also needs to be conducted regularly.

In the theoretical realm, this study provides a starting point for the development of the Digital Bibliotherapy Model concept. This model opens up opportunities to combine bibliotherapy, multimedia learning, and self-regulation theories into a technology-based counseling framework. Further research is expected to deepen the theoretical dimensions of this model, for example by examining the mediating role of empathy, resilience, or emotional literacy in the effectiveness of interventions. Cross-cultural and cross-level educational studies are also needed to ensure the generalization of the model to a broader context.

From a methodological perspective, future research should use a quasi-experimental design with a control group so that the effects of the intervention can be measured more comprehensively. Longitudinal analysis can also be conducted to observe the sustainability of changes in student behavior after long-term use of the media. In addition, exploring the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in digital bibliotherapy could be a direction for future research, for example through adaptive systems that can tailor reading material to the emotional profile or stress level of individual students.

More broadly, this research is expected to inspire the development of innovative counseling services that combine technology with a humanistic approach. In the context of 21st-century education and the Society 5.0 era, school counselors are required not only to provide face-to-face services but also to create safe, reflective, and meaningful digital spaces for students' psychological development. Therefore, the results of this study can be used as a reference for the development of sustainable education policies based on emotional literacy and digital mental health.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declares that there are no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. The research was conducted independently without any financial, personal, or institutional relationships that could be perceived as influencing the objectivity or integrity of the study.

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