

Strategies for Enhancing Self-Confidence through Public Speaking in Elementary Education

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the limited optimization of character-based approaches in fostering elementary students' self-confidence, which often remains overshadowed by cognitive-oriented learning. It aims to analyze how structured Public Speaking extracurricular activities, combined with supportive social environments, contribute to the development of students' self-confidence at MI Faradissal Jannah. A qualitative case study design was employed, involving interviews with the principal, extracurricular supervisors, and participating students, alongside direct observations and documentation analysis. The findings reveal that self-confidence develops through two key mechanisms: (1) strategic instructional practices, including gradual training, repeated performance, and constructive feedback, and (2) an enabling environment characterized by peer support and teacher facilitation. These factors collectively enhance students' verbal clarity, public speaking courage, and non-verbal expressiveness. The study contributes to existing literature by highlighting an integrative model that combines experiential learning strategies with the internalization of religious values in a madrasah contextan aspect rarely explored in prior research. This model demonstrates that sustained and value-based Public Speaking programs can systematically strengthen students' self-confidence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ontologically, education is not merely a process of transferring knowledge from teachers to students, but rather a conscious, planned, and continuous effort to develop individuals holistically. Education functions to nurture students' potential so that they grow into individuals who are intellectually competent, emotionally mature, morally upright, and possess strong character. In this context, education does not only emphasize cognitive aspects but also integrates affective and psychomotor domains in every learning process [1], [2].

Character education at the elementary school level plays a very central role, as it serves as the primary foundation for shaping students' character. Through character education, educational institutions play an important role in helping students understand their identity, develop their potential, and prepare themselves to face future challenges. Nugroho (2023) emphasizes that character education implemented from an early age serves as a foundation for developing strong personalities, especially in the digital era where information and social change occur rapidly. Character education also plays an important role in guiding students to express themselves appropriately and improve their language skills [3], [4].

One of the key character traits that must be consistently developed in students is self-confidence. Self-confidence is not merely a spontaneous behavior but part of a stable personality structure that influences how individuals think, speak, and make decisions in challenging situations. Individuals with strong self-confidence are better able to express their opinions, cope with pressure, and demonstrate composure in problem-solving [5], [6]. Furthermore, students with high levels of self-confidence tend to be more active, willing to perform, and resilient in the face of failure.

Several recent studies have shown a strong relationship between self-confidence and students' academic achievement. [5], [7] explain that self-confidence positively influences students' academic abilities and social interactions. Research conducted by [8], [9] also reveals that students who actively participate in Public Speaking extracurricular activities experience significant improvements in self-confidence. These findings indicate that Public Speaking can serve as an effective medium for fostering students' self-confidence in elementary school environments.

In the national education system, extracurricular activities hold an important position as an integral part of the curriculum. These activities not only function as a means of utilizing free time but also as a platform for character development, talent cultivation, and the internalization of moral values. When extracurricular activities are implemented with proper planning, continuous guidance, and measurable evaluation, students' character can develop optimally, including in terms of self-confidence. One activity that is particularly relevant for character development is Public Speaking, as it trains communication skills, self-control, and students' courage to speak in public.

MI Faradisa Jannah was selected as the research site because it has a strong vision to produce future leaders with Qur'anic character and academic excellence. This vision aligns closely with the objective of this study, namely the development of students' self-confidence through Public Speaking activities. As a primary educational institution, MI Faradisa Jannah is committed to shaping students who are not only intellectually capable but also possess strong character in accordance with Islamic values.

Based on initial interviews and observations conducted on October 4, 2025, it was found that many students come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Some students also experience difficulties in using proper Bahasa Indonesia and lack self-confidence. This indicates a need to develop effective communication skills as part of building students' self-confidence in alignment with the school's vision of producing future leaders.

Through structured Public Speaking activities, students can learn to speak confidently in public while also developing critical thinking skills, organizing arguments, and collaborating with others. Thus, Public Speaking activities not only support the development of self-confidence but also align with MI Faradissal Jannah's vision of nurturing future leaders with strong Qur'anic character and academic achievement.

Epistemologically, there remains a gap between theory and practice in developing students' self-confidence at the elementary school level. In everyday educational practice, efforts to build self-confidence are often not optimal, as learning activities tend to focus more on cognitive achievement. Meanwhile, affective domains and personality development are often neglected [6], [10]. Public Speaking activities, which should serve as a means of character development, are often limited to annual competitions rather than being implemented as continuous and structured training programs. In fact, research by [8] shows that regularly implemented and structured Public Speaking activities can foster courage, enhance critical thinking skills, and strengthen students' self-confidence.

Research conducted by [1] on the role of Public Speaking in building elementary students' self-confidence shows that such activities help students become more confident, improve self-esteem, and motivate them to develop in various aspects of life. Another study by [11] on the development of students' self-confidence through Tapak Suci extracurricular activities in a Muhammadiyah Islamic junior high school also demonstrates positive results, showing that structured extracurricular activities can foster discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence.

Although previous studies have highlighted important aspects of character development, there remains a research gap (novelty) addressed in this study. Unlike prior research, this study specifically explores the strategies used by mentors in integrating communication techniques with the internalization of religious values at MI Faradissal Jannah. The main focus is not merely on the outcome of students' speaking confidence, but on the mechanisms through which character values are instilled through a distinctive madrasah-based approach that has not been extensively discussed in previous studies. This aspect constitutes both the distinguishing feature and the originality of this research.

Based on the phenomena observed in the field and the identified research gap from previous studies, the researcher considers it crucial to conduct an in-depth study on mentor strategies in instilling character values through speaking skills. Students' self-confidence at MI Faradissal Jannah is not merely about technical speaking skills but is the result of a structured process of value internalization. Therefore, this study is conducted under the title: *Strategy for Developing Students' Self-Confidence through Public Speaking Activities at MI Faradissal Jannah, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency.*

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, aimed at understanding the role of Public Speaking extracurricular activities in developing students' self-confidence at MI Faradissal Jannah. The case study examines the experiences of students who actively participate in these activities, as well as the perceptions of

extracurricular supervisors and the madrasah principal regarding their influence on students' character development. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the nature of the research, which focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon within a specific context [12]. To ensure research rigor, credibility was strengthened through source triangulation across multiple data collection methods and member checking to validate findings with participants.

Research Location

This research was conducted at MI Faradissal Jannah, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency, during the period from October 2025 to February 2026. The location was selected based on the school's focus on integrating character and moral education into its curriculum, as well as its status as a leading Islamic school in the area.

Population and Sample

1. 20 students participating in the Public Speaking extracurricular activity,
2. 2 extracurricular supervising teachers,
3. 1 madrasah principal.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using three main techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation.

1. Interviews

The interviews used were semi-structured. This technique was chosen to provide the researcher with a structured set of guiding questions while still allowing flexibility to explore further questions in depth based on participants' responses. Interviews were conducted with students, extracurricular supervisors, and the madrasah principal to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding Public Speaking activities and their impact on students' self-confidence.

2. Observation

Observations were carried out during Public Speaking activities to record how students applied public speaking skills and interacted with the audience. The focus of observation was on changes in students' self-confidence as reflected in their behavior.

3. Documentation

Documentation includes written documents related to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Public Speaking extracurricular activities. The collected documents include:

- a. Syllabus/Modules/Learning Program Plans for Public Speaking extracurricular activities (instruments used),
- b. Speech materials/scripts prepared by students,
- c. Photographs of activities as physical evidence of implementation, and
- d. Field notes.

These data were used to support the findings obtained from interviews and observations.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique used in this study follows Miles and Huberman, who state that qualitative data analysis is conducted interactively and continuously until completion. The main activities include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

a. Data Collection

Data in this study were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation.

b. Data Reduction

Data reduction is inseparable from the analysis process, where the researcher selects relevant data and develops it into a narrative. This process helps to sharpen, focus, and organize raw data from field notes, making it easier for further data collection and retrieval when needed (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

c. Data Display

Data display refers to the organized set of information that enables conclusion drawing and action-taking. After data reduction, the next step is analyzing and presenting the data in a narrative text form.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

This research was conducted at MI Faradissal Jannah, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency. The research stages included initial observation in October 2025, instrument development in November 2025, testing of Chapters I–III in December 2025, and the implementation of the research on January 23, 2026. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques including observation, interviews, and documentation, and was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994; [13]. The research subjects consisted of the principal, the Public Speaking extracurricular supervisor, and students participating in the activity. Data validity was tested using source triangulation, by comparing interview, observation, and documentation data to obtain valid and credible findings.

1. Implementation of Public Speaking Extracurricular Activities

Based on interviews with the principal, the Public Speaking extracurricular activity is a program aimed at developing students' character, particularly in terms of courage, responsibility, and discipline. The activity is conducted regularly every week with various forms of practice such as speeches, presentations, and public speaking exercises. Behavioral changes from initially lacking confidence to becoming more courageous in speaking in public.

Observations indicated that the activities were conducted actively, with students given opportunities to perform in turns, and teachers providing direct guidance and evaluation. Documentation results also showed active student participation, marked by increased confidence, good interaction, and improved engagement in Public Speaking activities.

2. The Role of Public Speaking Extracurricular Activities in Developing Students' Self-Confidence

Public Speaking extracurricular activities have a positive impact on students' self-confidence development. Observations showed that students became more active, confident in expressing opinions, and less excessively nervous. Documentation further indicated that students were able to perform individually with more confident expressions and demonstrated increased courage in public speaking.

Across interview, observation, and documentation data, a consistent pattern emerges: repeated exposure to speaking tasks, combined with direct teacher facilitation, creates an experiential learning cycle that gradually strengthens students' self-confidence. This is reflected in observable behavioral shifts, where students transition from initial hesitation to greater willingness to speak, improved clarity in delivering ideas, and more controlled non-verbal expressions. Analytically, the results reveal two interrelated mechanisms underlying this development. First, instructional strategies such as staged practice, performance rotation, and immediate feedback function as scaffolding that enables students to build confidence incrementally. Second, the social learning environment marked by teacher support and peer interaction acts as reinforcement that reduces anxiety and encourages active participation. The convergence of these elements suggests that self-confidence is not formed solely through skill acquisition but through a dynamic interaction between practice, feedback, and social validation, resulting in more active engagement and sustained participation in Public Speaking activities.

Implementation of Public Speaking Extracurricular Activities in Supporting Character Development

Based on the research findings, Public Speaking extracurricular activities at MI Faradissal Jannah have been implemented in a structured and sustainable manner to support students' character development. This is reflected in the planning, regular implementation, and evaluation conducted by the supervising teacher. These findings are consistent with character education theory, which states that character formation can be achieved through habituation, direct experience, and social interaction within educational environments [14], [15].

Public Speaking activities also engage students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects simultaneously, enabling holistic development. This aligns with the view that extracurricular activities play a significant role in developing students' character and skills (Lamb et al., 2022). The character traits developed include courage, responsibility, discipline, and communication skills, which are consistent with previous studies indicating that communication-based activities enhance social skills and character [16], [17].

The teacher's role is crucial in providing guidance, motivation, and evaluation, acting as a facilitator in character development [18]. Strategies such as gradual training, motivation, real-life simulations, and direct evaluation represent active learning approaches proven effective in character formation [19], [20].

From the perspective of Kolb's experiential learning theory, learning occurs effectively through direct experience and reflection (Kolb, 1984). In this context, students

actively engage in public speaking practices, leading to deeper character development. This is supported by findings showing behavioral changes after direct involvement [21].

Additionally, the implementation reflects student-centered learning, where students act as active participants. This approach allows optimal self-development through direct engagement [22]. Other studies also show that student-centered learning significantly improves social skills and character [8].

A supportive learning environment also contributes significantly. A school environment that allows students to express themselves without fear enhances courage and participation [23]. This highlights the importance of environmental factors in supporting extracurricular success in character development (Lamb et al., 2022).

The Role of Public Speaking Extracurricular Activities in Developing Students' Self-Confidence

The findings indicate that Public Speaking extracurricular activities play a significant role in enhancing students' self-confidence. This is evident from behavioral changes where students become more courageous, active, and confident in public speaking. These findings align with the theory that self-confidence develops through experience, practice, and social support (Usher, 2023).

Through regular practice, students gain direct experience, which is a key factor in increasing self-confidence [18]. Indicators such as self-belief, courage, optimism, and responsibility were observed in students' behavior, demonstrating alignment with theoretical indicators of self-confidence [1].

Support from teachers and peers also plays a crucial role. A positive environment helps students develop confidence optimally [23], [24]. Teaching strategies such as creating a safe environment, providing motivation, repeated practice, and giving appreciation are essential in building confidence.

From Bandura's self-efficacy theory, confidence develops through mastery experiences, observation, and social support. In this activity, students gain successful experiences when performing publicly, which strengthens their belief in their abilities. This is supported by research showing that direct experience significantly improves students' self-confidence [25]. Furthermore, Public Speaking activities help students manage anxiety when speaking in public. Repeated practice enables students to become accustomed to situations that previously caused fear. This aligns with studies showing that public speaking practice reduces anxiety and increases confidence.

3.2. Discussion

The effectiveness of Public Speaking extracurricular activities in supporting character development lies in the mechanism through which learning is structured and experienced. Rather than merely providing opportunities to speak, the program operates through iterative practice, guided reflection, and continuous feedback, forming an experiential learning cycle. This process enables students to internalize character values such as discipline, responsibility, and courage through habituation and direct engagement. The integration of cognitive, affective (emotional regulation), and psychomotor domains creates

a holistic learning environment, where character is not taught abstractly but constructed through repeated action and social interaction. The teacher's role as facilitator further strengthens this mechanism by scaffolding learning through gradual challenges and real-time evaluation, allowing students to progress from dependence to autonomy.

In terms of self-confidence development, the findings suggest that confidence emerges as a cumulative outcome of mastery experiences and social reinforcement. Regular exposure to public performance reduces anxiety by normalizing speaking situations, while positive feedback and peer support function as validation that strengthens self-efficacy beliefs. This aligns with the notion that confidence is built not instantly, but through consistent success experiences in supportive environments. However, a critical limitation of this model is its contextual dependency: the effectiveness relies heavily on sustained program structure, teacher competence, and a psychologically safe environment, which may not be uniformly available across schools. Additionally, the integration of religious values, while a strength in this setting, may limit direct transferability to more diverse or secular contexts without adaptation. Nevertheless, the core mechanism structured experiential practice combined with social support remains broadly applicable, suggesting that similar frameworks can be implemented in other educational settings with contextual adjustments.

Finally, constructive feedback from teachers is a key factor in enhancing self-confidence. Positive feedback helps students recognize their strengths and weaknesses, encouraging continuous improvement [24]. Other studies also confirm that social support and a positive learning environment significantly contribute to students' confidence development [26].

4. CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that students' self-confidence is most effectively developed through the interaction between structured instructional strategies and a supportive social environment within Public Speaking extracurricular activities. Systematic training, continuous practice, and constructive feedback function as core mechanisms that enable students to internalize confidence through direct experience, while reinforcement from teachers and peers strengthens this process. A key contribution of this research lies in its integrative perspective, showing that experiential learning combined with the internalization of religious values forms a holistic approach to character development, extending beyond technical speaking skills to include moral and personal growth.

The findings imply that schools should design extracurricular programs that are consistent, experience-based, and supported by positive learning environments to optimize character formation. However, this study is limited to a single institutional context with a qualitative scope, which may restrict generalizability. Future research is recommended to apply mixed-method approaches or broader samples to validate and expand these findings across different educational settings. For wider society, this study offers a practical model for fostering students' self-confidence through structured and value-oriented activities, contributing to the development of more confident, communicative, and character-driven individuals.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, several recommendations are proposed as follows:

1. For the school, it is recommended to continue optimizing the implementation of Public Speaking extracurricular activities as a strategic means of character development. Schools should also enhance support through policies, facilities, and opportunities for students to perform in various forums, both internally and externally.
2. For extracurricular supervisors, it is recommended to continuously develop innovative, adaptive, and student-centered teaching strategies. In addition, providing constructive and continuous feedback should be maintained to optimally enhance students' self-confidence.
3. For students, it is expected that they make the most of Public Speaking extracurricular activities as a means to develop their potential, particularly in improving courage, communication skills, and self-confidence in various situations.
4. For parents, it is recommended to provide consistent support for their children's participation in extracurricular activities and to create a family environment that fosters the development of self-confidence.
5. For future researchers, it is suggested to expand the scope of research in terms of subjects, methods, and variables. Future studies may also examine the impact of Public Speaking activities on other character aspects, such as leadership, responsibility, and social skills.

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