

Building Self-Esteem in Elementary School Students: The Promising Benefits of Bibliotherapy

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ABSTRACT

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to explore the use of bibliotherapy as an intervention to enhance self-esteem in elementary school students.

Methods: This study used a quasi-experimental design with two control groups and two experimental groups consisting of both boys and girls. Pre-test and post-test assessments were conducted, and an eight-session training program was implemented for the experimental groups. The training program involved using stories as the primary tool for intervention, which were categorized into four types, including stories aimed at enhancing self-esteem and alleviating pain. From the category of self-esteem stories, eight stories were selected and delivered over four weeks, with two 45-minute sessions per week. The collected data were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). Each session lasted two hours per week.

Results: The study found that both boys and girls in the experimental groups experienced a significant increase in self-esteem, with the effect size measure indicating that 87% and 71% of the variance in self-esteem could be attributed to the independent variable of bibliotherapy in boys and girls, respectively. A comparison of the effectiveness of bibliotherapy between male and female students in a quasi-experimental study revealed that girls had significantly higher levels of self-esteem compared to boys.

Conclusion: The study suggests that presenting selected stories as an alternative approach to boosting self-esteem can provide valuable insights into children's self-esteem. These results are consistent with previous research that supports the effectiveness of bibliotherapy interventions in promoting self-esteem. The study highlights the potential of bibliotherapy as an effective intervention for enhancing self-esteem in elementary school students.

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Introduction

Developing positive self-identity through self-esteem and self-confidence is crucial for children. It is essential for all children to have a healthy sense of self-worth. Children with healthy self-esteem are better prepared to engage in learning. According to Maslow, individuals need to hold a positive regard for themselves to achieve their goals. Students with confidence are more resilient when faced with academic challenges and are more likely to approach various situations with assurance (Prince & Howard, 2002). The nurturing and enhancement of children's self-esteem are significantly impacted by their surroundings and social context, including their households, communities, and educational institutions.

A child's self-esteem is connected to their evaluation of how well they navigate the school, family, and community environments. A positive self-esteem manifests as a sense of capability, usefulness, and competence in social interactions within the family, school, and community settings (Niman et al., 2019).

The studies have shown that the students who have higher self-esteem are succeeding in their studies and educations. They communicate better with others, participate more in academic and non-academic communities, and utilize more social and emotional adjustment (Jalali & Azar, 2009). The students who have low self-esteem damage themselves by inferiority complex and their constant and negative self-criticism are one of the usual ways for them. They may experience intense emotions like sadness, anxiety, shame and guilt, humility, disappointment, and anger and may experience chronic courage less and disappointed in their lives. Finally, low self-esteem may result in depression and suicide (Letafati Beris & Younesi, 2011). One of the theoretical patterns, which justify the reasons for relinquishing from the study is a failure pattern of self-esteem. It is assumed that failure in a university can decrease students' self-esteem and vice versa (Najmi & Feizi, 2011). There are different ways to increase the people's self-esteem, including psychotherapy, bibliotherapy, and referring to the counseling center (Salimi et al., 2014).

Bibliotherapy (also called book therapy, poetry therapy or therapeutic storytelling) uses selected reading and related materials for therapeutic purposes to help the reader grow in self-understanding and resolve. It attempts to help readers understand themselves and cope with problems relevant to their personal situations and developmental needs at appropriate times (Hebert & Kent, 2000; Hoopes & Review, 1989; Janavičienė, 2012; Rafiei et al., 2023). It also uses books to provide psychiatric therapy. It is defined as using dynamic interaction along with reading a book in order to help the people to increase their cognitive understanding (Papi et al., 2017). Bibliotherapy is an important part of art therapy and many publications regarding bibliotherapy have been published in the past. However, there has none about the scientometric study to systematically analyze the development and emerging research trends on bibliotherapy (Xu et al., 2023).

Bibliotherapy is “the process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature under the guidance of a trained helper” (Shrodes, 1950). The use of books selected on the basis of content in a planned reading program designed to facilitate the recovery of patients suffering from mental illness or emotional disturbance. Ideally, the process occurs in three phases: personal identification of the reader with a particular character in the recommended work, resulting in psychological catharsis, which leads to rational insight concerning the relevance of the solution suggested in the text to the reader’s own experience. Assistance of a trained psychotherapist is advised (Reitz, 2004).

Bibliotherapy is defined as an communication between the reader and certain literature which is useful in aiding personal modification (Lindeman & Kling, 1968). Webster (1961) defined bibliotherapy as:” the use of selected reading materials as therapeutic adjuvants in medicine and psychiatry; also, guidance in the solution of personal problems through directed reading. This definition concisely suggests two approaches to bibliotherapy: one a scientific technique, the other an informal one (American Library Association, 2012).

Bibliotherapy utilizes literature in various formats to assist children in addressing their self-esteem and self-confidence issues. It aims to achieve several objectives such as increasing awareness, appreciation, and understanding; enhancing insight and integration; providing information and alternatives; promoting coping skills; developing the ability to recognize personal skills and preferences; identifying and labeling emotions or conditions; releasing pent-up emotions in a secure environment, often through discussion or related activities; recognizing potential solutions or resolutions presented in the story and examining how characters express their feelings; and exploring possible ways to address or resolve these concerns. (Peterson, 2015). Children can experience the advantages of bibliotherapy through three stages: identification, catharsis, and insight. There are typically two types of bibliotherapy:

- Developmental Bibliotherapy, which is utilized by teachers, librarians, and other individuals without professional therapy backgrounds to support the normal development and self-fulfillment of generally healthy children.
- Clinical Bibliotherapy, which is conducted by psychologists and other professionals who specialize in addressing significant emotional or behavioral issues. In this context, bibliotherapy serves as a supplementary tool alongside formal treatment and recovery processes for patients.

The current study is a developmental bibliotherapy. Thus, the purpose of the study is to explore the use of bibliotherapy as an intervention to enhance self-esteem in elementary school students. Note that reading self-help books and developmental bibliotherapy can be used as a commonly used therapeutic intervention. Previous studies argued that bibliotherapy increases the self-awareness of people of different ages. Some of these studies are mentioned below. Niman et al.

(2019) revealed a positive influence of bibliotherapy on the self-esteem of early adolescents. Gumilang (2019) concluded that (1) students of class VII who were the subject of research had low self-esteem before being given intervention and after being given intervention addressed the improvement in students' self-esteem feeling, (2) intervention using bibliotherapy to improve the self-esteem of students of junior high school in the Kediri City (Java, Indonesia) could be declared successful and effective.

Pettersson (2018) also showed that participants in the study had short-term improved psychological well-being after participating in a guided reading circle. The results of the interviews clarified that their social well-being had been positively influenced in various ways, including greater self-esteem and increased social interaction (Pettersson, 2018). Moreover, the results of the previous studies conducted by Zhou et al. (2012), Salimi et al. (2016), Altmann and Nielsen (1974) confirm that we can help the students to improve their self-esteem through bibliotherapy as a self-help therapeutic technique and also as a simple, inexpensive and available approach. Briefly, bibliotherapy improves coping skills by learning about alternative responses to problems; reduces negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, and loneliness; and enhances self-esteem, interpersonal skills, and emotional maturity. However, bibliotherapists and helpers must be thoroughly familiar with the content of materials they intend to recommend or use. They must be thoroughly acquainted with the reader/listener to anticipate the state of reader/listener readiness for the reading materials. They must ensure that factual material under discussion is accurate, consistent, current, and not misleading, ensuring that stories deal with individual characters and situations similar enough to facilitate some level of identification and empathy. Nevertheless, bibliotherapy "is not a panacea... neither can it be used with all individuals" (Zaccaria & Moses, 1969). Shrodes (1950) emphasizes, "... For no two persons can there be an absolute equivalence of symbols, for no two people have identical psychological fields."(p.85).

Materials and Methods

The present study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of bibliotherapy intervention in a real-school environment. The research design was quasi-experimental, utilizing a pre-test-post-test format with a control group. The data collection method involved comparing the outcomes of the group receiving bibliotherapy with those who did not. This approach permitted for an evaluation of the impact of bibliotherapy on the participants' self-esteem levels in the elementary school setting. This study aimed to test the hypothesis and answer the following research question: "Does self-esteem (the research dependent variable) vary by manipulating the independent variable (bibliotherapy)?" In other words, this study analyzed the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Similar to Sarmad et al. (2014), to establish a causal relationship between two or several variables, pilot studies were conducted with the following assumptions: 1) independent variables are manipulated; 2) other variables except for the dependent variable were invariant and

controlled; 3) the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable was observed. To this end, the participants were randomly grouped into the experimental and control groups and the differences between participants were controlled.

Research Population

It included all of the elementary school fourth-grade girls' and boys' students who studied in the district 9 of Tehran Municipality in the 2022-2023 academic (educational) years. It is significant to mention that the enrolled students in this study acknowledged public education and were divided by gender, with girls and boys studying in separate classrooms. In terms of demographic characteristics, the majority of students were approximately 10 years old. All participants were of Iranian nationality, representing various ethnicities including Persian, Kurdish, Turkish, and other Iranian groups.

Sampling Method

The multi-stage cluster sampling method was used in this research. Therefore, from the 9th district of Tehran City, one area was first selected randomly, and from the elementary schools in this district, two schools (a 'girls' school' and a 'boys' school') were selected randomly. Finally, from each of the two schools two fourth-grade classes were selected randomly as the research samples. One class was randomly selected as the experimental group from the two (boys and girls) classes, and one was selected as the control group. At the end, two experimental groups (with group 1 including girls and group 2 including boys) and two control groups (with group 1 including girls and group 2 including boys) were formed.

Research Tool

Eysenck's Self-Esteem Inventory (ESI) was used to assess self-esteem in the pre- and post-test phases. This inventory consists of 30 questions, and the respondent should check the "Yes", "No", or "I don't know" options for each question. In the instructions on this inventory, the respondent is asked to avoid the last option ("I don't know") to the possible extent. A higher score on this scale shows a higher level of self-esteem. Hormozinezhad (2001) reported validities of 0.74 and 0.79 for girls' and boys' students, respectively. The calculated reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was 0.88 and 0.87 using the Cronbach's alpha method and the bi-section method, respectively.

Experimental Research Steps

To test the effect of bibliotherapy on the research population, stories were randomly selected from a book entitled "Stories: Tools for reducing children's psychological problems (e.g., self-esteem, self-confidence, sorrow, aggression, and fear)". The stories were classified into four categories of stories for increasing self-esteem, reducing sorrow, etc. From the group of self-esteem stories, eight

stories were selected for increasing self-esteem, and eight 45-minute sessions were held over four weeks (two sessions a week). In each session, one story was provided to the participants for reading (Table 1). The research steps were as follows:

- Step 1: Selecting members of the experimental and control groups (from the boys' and girls' schools) and randomly putting them in the experimental and control groups.
- Step 2: Introducing the teacher to the students.
- Step 3: Administering the self-esteem pre-test on the control and experimental groups.

A collaborative working method was implemented on the experimental group, and the first three steps were common for the two groups. To avoid the research flow from becoming abnormal or artificial, the students who participated in the study were not directly informed about the research objectives. This helped to control any potential reaction effects that could rise due to knowing the goals of the study. Moreover, the researchers chose to conduct the study in natural classroom environments without making any changes to the situation of the students. This approach helped certify that the students did not become overly sensitive to the experiment or the subject under study. To avoid issues related to spatial proximity among subjects, the researchers selected schools that were far enough apart to minimize the possibility of information exchange between students. This also helped to decrease the chances of creating moral antipathy and weakening the morale of the control group learners (Liaqatdar et al., 2012).

Table 1. Description of a 45-Minute Bibliotherapy Session for the Experimental Group.

No.	Classroom description	Time (Minutes)
1	Introducing the teacher: The objective is to explain the significance of reading appropriate the selected books.	5
2	A story was provided to students for reading.	15
3	The story and its moral message were described by several students.	10
4	The teacher explains the summary and asks several questions about the moral message of the story.	15

Storybooks used in this research

The study focused on using stories from a book called "*Stories are a tool for reducing psychological problems in children such as lack of self-confidence, sadness, aggression, and fear*" written by Parirokh and Majdi (2014). The researchers found that the selected stories had a significant impact on improving self-esteem and confidence in the participants using various techniques. The stories offered different approaches to boost one's self-esteem.

1. "The Little Firefighter" used methods such as creating a positive mental image, offering a self-esteem model, creating self-worth, and using potential abilities.
2. "Wicker Curtains Dream" used the high self-esteem method.
3. "The Clever Mouse" used creativity to increase self-esteem.
4. "The Rock Stew" used creativity to increase self-esteem.

5. “The Smiling Man” used self-worth, self-acceptance, and acceptance by others to improve self-esteem.
6. “The Straw Man and Straw Mom” proposed a self-esteem model and used a positive mental image and creativity to improve self-esteem.
7. “Kindness Brings Its Reward” used creativity, self-knowledge, and potentials to increase self-esteem.
8. “The Kind Rock Fish” used self-worth and lack of humiliation to increase the reader’s self-esteem.

The intervention program was assessed by specialists for its content validity. To evaluate it, a checklist containing educational objectives and tasks related to them was given to three professionals. Using Lawshe's model of determining content validity, these specialists rated the educational goals on a Likert scale with three options: "necessary", "useful but unnecessary" and "unnecessary". After making necessary changes, the protocol was considered appropriate based on the average content validity index.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used as indices in the descriptive statistics section. SPSS was used to analyze the research data in the inferential statistics section. Table 2 presents a comparison of the mean scores for both experimental and control groups before and after the bibliotherapy intervention program aimed at improving students' self-esteem levels. The results revealed that the post-test self-esteem levels of both boys’ and girls’ students in the experimental group increased compared to those in the control group. Specifically, the mean self-esteem score of boys rose significantly from an average level to a high level after bibliotherapy intervention, while no significant difference was observed in the control group's pre-test and post-test scores. In contrast, the girls' mean self-esteem score also significantly increased from an average level to a high level following the intervention. However, the increase in boys' self-esteem scores was higher than that in girls' scores. The second research hypothesis, which suggested that bibliotherapy has a different effect on self-esteem improvement in boys’ and girls’ students, was therefore confirmed.

The research hired statistical analysis to survey differences between the experimental and control groups through covariance analysis (ANCOVA). Prior to conducting ANCOVA, the researchers tested its assumptions and confirmed their compliance. The homogeneity of variance was assessed using the Levene's test, which revealed that it was acceptable ($F(5, 15) = 1.354$, $sig = 0.292$). As a result, ANCOVA was deemed appropriate for testing hypotheses based on homogeneity of variances. The study used statistical tests to analyze the impact of a pre-test on post-test scores in two groups. The Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the dependent variable

components had a normal distribution. The analysis of covariance test was conducted to control for pre-test effects and required a correlation between pre-test and post-test scores.

Table 2. The pre-test and post-test self-esteem descriptive statistics were compared between the experimental and control groups

No.	Group	gender	Variable	Number	Pre-test		Post-test	
					SD	M	SD	M
1	Experimental	boy	Self-Esteem	30	3.89	11.57	2.63	21.33
2	Control	boy	Self-Esteem	30	3.14	11.30	2.79	12.13
3	Experimental	girl	Self-Esteem	30	5.01	14.38	4.16	23.53
4	Control	girl	Self-Esteem	30	4.36	11.8	3.8	12.52

Results

Results showed a significant positive relationship between pre-test and post-test scores for all dependent variables. Another assumption was the homogeneity of regression slope, which was confirmed through investigation of regression lines in two similar groups. Inter-examiner effects were also tested and confirmed homogeneity of the slope of the regression lines of scores in two groups. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance showed no significant difference in error variance between the control and experimental groups. Overall, the results suggest that the pre-test significantly impacted post-test scores, which were effectively controlled for in the analysis.

Table 3. The outcomes of a covariance analysis conducted on the initial hypothesis

No	Source of variations	Dependent variable in the post-test	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean of squares	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Powerb
1	Groups	Boys' self-esteem	1225.290	1	1225.290	387.77	.000	.872	1.000
		Girls' self-esteem	1278.899	1	1278.899	137.89	.000	.708	1.000
2	Error	Boys' self-esteem	180.110	57	3.160				
		Girls' self-esteem	528.652	57	9.275				
3	Sum	Boys' self-esteem	1695.733	59					
		Girls' self-esteem	2741.212	59					

The analysis presented in Table 3 and by $F(1,57) = 387.77, p = 0.0001$ suggests that the difference detected in self-esteem levels of boys' students during the post-test phase was significant after regulating for pre-test scores as a covariate, with a significance level of $p = 0.0001$ and degrees of freedom (1,57). These findings provide support for the research hypothesis, indicating that bibliotherapy had a positive impact on improving the self-esteem of boys' students. Additionally, the results suggest that the observed differences between pre-test and post-test means for boys' students in the experimental group are not due to chance alone, confirming the effectiveness of the experimental intervention. According to these findings, it becomes clear that the differences between the pre-test and post-test means of male students in the experimental group are not merely due to chance, and this finding confirms the effect of the experimental procedure. These findings

indicate that the differences between the pre-test and post-test means of female students in the experimental group are not merely due to chance, and this finding confirms the effect of the experimental procedure. Studies have shown that girls tend to have higher levels of self-esteem compared to boys.

Based on the above phrases, it can be inferred that boys may benefit more from bibliotherapy intervention because: The analysis suggests that bibliotherapy had a positive impact on improving the self-esteem of boys' students, indicating that boys may have more room for improvement in terms of self-esteem compared to girls. Studies have shown that girls tend to have higher levels of self-esteem compared to boys, which could mean that boys may benefit more from bibliotherapy intervention to catch up with girls in terms of self-esteem.

After controlling for the pre-test scores as a covariate, the results from Table 3 and statistical analysis ($F(1,57) = 137.89, p = 0.0001$) recommend a significant increase in self-esteem for girls' students in the experimental group following the intervention ($p = 0.0001$). These findings indicate that the detected differences between pre-test and post-test means are not simply due to chance, if evidence of the effectiveness of the experimental intervention.

Thus, it could be stated that the research hypothesis is approved at a significance level of 99 percent. Thus, bibliotherapy positively influenced the increase in the self-esteem of girls' students. These two conclusions indicate the approval of the first research hypothesis (which suggests the effect of bibliotherapy on the improvement of self-esteem of elementary school students). According to Table 3, the value of the obtained Partial Eta Squared, the effect size measure, for boys and girls respectively, for the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable was 0.872 and 0.708, respectively, which shows 87% in the boys' group and 71% in the girls' group, respectively. Seventy-one percent of the variance of the dependent variable (self-esteem of the experimental group students) was due to the independent variable (bibliotherapy). In other words, the results indicate a positive effect of bibliotherapy on improving self-esteem. Thus, the self-esteem of the experimental group of boys and girls increased significantly.

The results accessible in Table 4 show that both boys and girls who experienced bibliotherapy had a higher overall self-esteem score compared to their peers who did not participate in the intervention program. Furthermore, the study found that the bibliotherapy-based intervention significantly increased the average self-esteem of the participants. These findings confirm the research hypothesis, indicating the positive impact of bibliotherapy on self-esteem. In particular, the mean self-esteem scores of the experimental groups (boys and girls) were significantly higher than those of the control groups after the intervention program. This suggests that the bibliotherapy intervention program had a positive effect on the participants' self-esteem. These results offer important insights into the potential benefits of bibliotherapy as an effective intervention for enhancing self-esteem among students. By encouraging reading and promoting self-reflection,

bibliotherapy can help persons develop a more positive self-image and advance their overall well-being. In brief, the practical concepts for the international community and school psychology should be emphasized and expanded more. Bibliotherapy, school-based mental health programs, and interventions that consider gender differences and are guided by theoretical or empirical rationale can effectively improve self-esteem in students. By incorporating these insights, professionals in the field can better serve the diverse needs of students and promote their well-being in educational settings.

Table 4. Estimated Marginal Means

No.	Group	gender	Variable	Post-Test		95% Confidence Interval	
				Std. Error	M	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	Experimental	boy	Self-Esteem	0.325	21.26	20.606	21.906
2	Control	boy	Self-Esteem	0.325	12.21	11.561	12.861
3	Experimental	girl	Self-Esteem	0.567	22.82	21.684	23.954
4	Control	girl	Self-Esteem	0.567	13.23	12.096	14.366

Discussion

Principal Findings

This study aimed to investigate the effect of Bibliotherapy on improving the self-esteem of elementary school girls' and boys' students. The results of the study revealed that the bibliotherapy intervention program was effective in improving the self-esteem of students in the experimental group, compared to the control group, who did not receive such an intervention. Indeed, the present quasi-experimental study provided insight into children's self-esteem, presenting selected stories as an alternative way to increase their self-esteem.

Comparison with the Literature

This finding is consistent with the results of previous research (e.g., Gumilang, 2019; Niman et al., 2019; Niman, Yunita & Handayani, 2019; Parirokh & Majdi, 2014; Peterson, 2015; Tofaha, 2012) that confirmed the effectiveness of the bibliotherapy intervention in increasing the self-esteem.

According to Rogers, self-esteem is the continuous evaluation of a person in relation to his worth. In other words, the main element of self-esteem in a person from adolescence to old age is based on a person's judgment and evaluation of himself. But in terms of self-esteem in children with the above concept, there is a difference, the children's self-esteem is like a layered cloud that changes daily and includes the child's complex feelings, beliefs, and aspirations based on his or her changing skills as a result of the influence of the world around them. Moreover, it is often influenced by others' descriptions of the child because they have not yet developed more complex

thinking abilities. In fact, as children gain self-awareness and identity, they value their characteristics positively and negatively, and this evaluation is often based on behavioral feedback from others and a set of assessments that children make. It forms their self-esteem from the theorists' point of view; "assimilation" forms the basis of children's self-esteem. Because children's learning is accompanied by a spirit of play and experience, and they achieve beliefs about their abilities by experience. To improve a child's self-esteem, stories can be used to address the child's subconscious and prepare them to face the real world by recognizing and changing inconsistent schemas by replacing positive ones. According to Yang's early maladaptive schema theories, each child learns to make a string of these patterns in their mind. While listening to the stories, completing the unfinished stories, and talking about the messages of the story, the child learns to imitate the positive characteristics of the story's characters beyond the way of responding to the needs and to perceive the positive feeling in all dimensions. This process helps to increase the child's self-esteem. It is also important to provide children with guidance, support, and coping techniques to help them handle their life and establish their independence. Self-esteem comes from learning to accept who we are by seeing the insufficiencies and still choosing to like ourselves. Every child's self-esteem grows with each experience of successful interactions through positive words.

To promote proper growth and prevent psychological problems in adulthood, children should have access to appropriate facilities for experimentation. Bibliotherapy has been found to be an effective method for addressing low self-esteem in children, which can hinder their mental and social development. Specifically, storybooks that aim to enhance self-esteem can be considered valuable tools for promoting positive self-improvement. However, it is important to note that stories alone cannot fully contribute to a child's mental growth. It is crucial for tutors and parents to have a good understanding of age-dependent characteristics and to collaborate positively. By using age-appropriate stories, discussing their contents, and periodically reminding students of the story's messages, children can enhance their self-esteem. Studies have revealed that bibliotherapy is a simple and effective method for enlightening self-esteem among adolescents (Heath et al., 2005). Reading books can deliver relief, increase self-esteem, and help children cope with puzzling experiences (McCulliss & Chamberlain, 2013) Thus, bibliotherapy can be a appreciated resource for helping emotional growth and healing in children (Heath et al., 2005).

The present study also indicated that the increase in the self-esteem of girls' students was higher than boys' students after the bibliotherapy intervention. In this regard, different results can be seen in studies. The findings of Niman et al. (2019) showed that females had lower self-esteem than males before and after the bibliotherapy intervention. According to researchers, this discrepancy results in research findings with some research from other countries, maybe due to local culture and community perspectives to girls or boys in different societies. In bibliotherapy, two conditions

should be necessarily met. First, the therapist or tutor course should have a thorough knowledge of appropriate stories. Second, the therapist should use stories that match the age-dependent characteristics of children and even their genders and needs. The most important and stressed point about bibliotherapy and its different phases is the precise selection of books used for this purpose. These books should match the literary understanding and age of the target group. However, there is no specific method for giving bibliotherapy. Either a book may be recommended or prescribed for a consulting session to be discussed after reading, or a book may be recommended to all of the participants in a group consulting session.

Since little attention has been paid in Iran to the use of bibliotherapy as a way of treating psychological disorders, there are many shortages and gaps such as the lack of adequate knowledge of possible stakeholders, lack of suitable sources of information in all areas, lack of adequate bibliotherapist, and lack of proper courses in the universities. This research is expected to partly set the scene for similar studies in this area.

Conclusion

The research findings display that bibliotherapy has a significant positive impact on refining the self-esteem of boys' and girls' students. The observed changes in pre-test and post-test means are not due to unplanned, confirming the effectiveness of the intervention. Moreover, the bibliotherapy-based intervention significantly increased the average self-esteem of participants, indicating that it can be an effective intervention for enhancing self-esteem among students. Bibliotherapy's focus on promoting reading and self-reflection can help individuals develop a positive self-image and improve their overall well-being. Thus, bibliotherapy is a promising intervention strategy for improving the self-esteem of elementary school students.

Author Contributions

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Data Availability Statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article and further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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Conflict of interest

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