

Quality Improvement and Management System Development of School Guidance and Counseling Services

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Abstract: The study aimed at developing an appropriate model to improve quality and develop management system of school guidance and counseling services. The study was divided into three phases conducted for three years in different school levels ranging from primary to higher education, in Java and Sumatra. The extension of the study was also conducted in Kindergarten and Special Education setting. The whole study came up with: the general models which provided a basis for developing frame work of guidance and counseling in every school level; frame work of guidance and counseling for every school level; standardized inventory of students' developmental tasks developed in a computerized system; and learning packages developed based on students' needs and development. Research findings show that the models were feasible and applicable and gave an improvement of quality of school guidance and counseling services and management.

Keywords: guidance, counseling, quality improvement.

The study was designed based on objective conditions faced in the implementation of school guidance program today. It was found that there were many weaknesses concerning the quality of guidance services and

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management. A number of previous studies (e.g., Kartadinata, 1993) showed that guidance services in the school setting was regarded and implemented as merely administrative and clerical works rather than real professional services for better performance, welfare and well-beingness of the students. There were gaps between students' aspirations or expectations and services provided by school counselors. It was also shown that there were real needs for immediate reorganization and redefinition of various aspects of school guidance program including aspects concerning staff competencies, appropriate guidance and counseling procedures, techniques and contents, and effective managerial supports.

The present study was concentrated on the development of intervention model for improving quality of services and of management system of school guidance and counseling at primary schools, junior and senior high schools, vocational high schools, and higher education. The development of appropriate model of guidance and counseling in various levels of education becomes important because of the differences of needs and of environmental and developmental problems of the students which implies variation of the implementation of guidance and counseling services at each educational level; the fact that development process is a continuity in nature. It means that further developmental stage is founded by former development. For this reason students are required to be able to make an effective decision and take an action for their personal development by their own choices. Since development is a life long process and guidance and counseling is purposed to help students reach an optimum development, guidance and counseling services are required to provide a healthy ecology of human development and help students to learn and develop effective behaviors through healthy interaction. Such an environment or ecology should be developed at every school level, beginning from kindergarten to higher education.

Based on the statement above this study is intended to put developmental point of view of counseling as a major approach for improving quality of school guidance and counseling services. Compared to other points of view or models, this model is more comprehensive because it does not only deal with maladaptive or deviant behaviors and prevent those deviant behaviors, but it also deals with developing the effective behaviors. For years four basic approaches to guidance and counseling have been developed: (a) crisis, (b) remedial, (c) preventive, and (d) developmental (Myrick in Muro and Kuttman, 1995).

In the *crisis model*, the counselor waits until there is some type of crisis and then leaps into action to help the person in crisis deal with the problem. With this model, quite frequently all parties involved expect the counselor to use crisis intervention techniques and "fix" the problem. The *remedial model* focuses on measurable weaknesses and tries to remediate them; the purpose of this intervention is to avoid a possible crisis in that particular area. The *preventive model* focuses on anticipating generic problems and preventing them from happening. The basic idea of this model is that if the counselor can educate students about the dangers of certain activities and the methods of avoiding them before they begin to indulge in these problem behaviors, the counselor will be able to prevent them from doing so. Most of the techniques used in preventive model involve teaching and disseminating information. The *developmental models* is more proactive than the other three models to guidance and counseling. Since the developmental model is based on student outcomes, the school counselor is required to develop a guidance curriculum in which there are developmentally appropriate activities that provide information and practice so that students have the opportunity to acquire skills and experiences that are required to get success in school and in life (Myrick, 1993).

In a broader perspective, the developmental view puts the population target of guidance and counseling services not limited to the student, and within the school organization, but it is directed to all individuals in various kinds of life organizations and cultures. The reason is that the healthy or optimum development and effective behavioral development should be reached by every individual in environmental organization. Therefore, the guidance and counseling should be directed toward endeavors to help individuals to be more aware about themselves and the ways they respond to the environment, to develop personal meaning about their behavior in the future. The strategy of guidance and counseling services become more toward endeavors to organize and to create an ecology of human development (Blocher, 1974; Blocher and Biggs, 1983).

Developmental model stems from the assumption that a healthy development will take place in a healthy interaction between individuals and their environment. The client of counseling in *the system*, and the proposition mainly emphasizes individual interaction within the system. The compatibility between individuals and environment becomes the core dynamic of individual roles in the system (Blocher and Biggs, 1983).

Intervention to the individual development occurs in natural setting, and the counselor acts as psychoeducators (Kuriloff, 1977; Blocher and Biggs, 1983), and counseling population target services embrace various dimensions (problems, intervention targets, settings, methods, services time) in a proper extent (Kuriloff, 1977).

METHOD

There were three objectives and at the same time became the main outputs that would be achieved by this research, i.e: an intervention model to improve the quality and to make a better management in guidance and counseling service through improving the existing program; a complete model of guidance and counseling as an output of intervention model implementation to the existing program; follow up recommendations for the purpose of socialization and dissemination of the improved model of guidance and counseling.

The study was divided into three phases. In the *first phase* the study was conducted in 35 institutional sites located in five provinces, including 11 primary schools (10 schools in West Java and one in Riau), six junior high schools (in Central Java), eight general senior high schools (five schools in West Java and three in West Sumatera), seven vocational schools (in Central Java), and three university level institutions (in Central Java).

Data and information were collected using questionnaires, observational techniques, and interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data analyses were applied to develop descriptions and profiles of student development characteristics, student developmental environment, and actual guidance programs and services in today's schools and university level institutions. Those descriptions and profiles were used as the main bases of the development of guidance intervention model. The intervention model was developed based on empirical findings during the study and conceptual analyses of certain theories.

In the *second phase* school-based action research strategy was applied in the whole try out program, where the researchers and teachers and other school personnel collaboratively developed, implemented, evaluated and reflected every cycle of the whole try out activity resulting in the translation of the model being tried out into operational program based on the appropriate needs and expectations of each school and its environment. An open seminar was conducted to sanction and validate the

findings of the try out program, and to prepare the third phase of the study. The *third phase* consisted of field testing activities of the models. The main purpose of the activities was to test the models' feasibility and applicability in other school settings.

RESULTS

General Model

The study came up with a general model for the quality improvement and development of guidance services and management system in the school setting, developed based on the empirical findings of the study, enriched by some theoretical and conceptual analyses, and sanctioned in an open seminar. Basic conceptual framework of the model was constructed around the following five main components.

First, vision on the Nature of Guidance and Mission of Guidance Program. This component consists of a brief, integrated and essential formulation of basic vision of the nature of guidance and the functions of guidance programs in the school setting. The formulation is abstracted from the opinions and expectations concerning guidance and guidance program of the related institutional leadership, teacher/faculty members, and students. This abstraction is integrated with conceptual formulation of the nature of guidance and the ideal functions of guidance programs in school setting, and by taking into consideration main external aspects, including environmental requirements, development, and present and future challenges. Based on this strategy, the vision of guidance nature and mission of guidance program are ideally formulated, but relevant with and based on actual conditions of present school setting (see Table 1).

Second, characteristics of student development and needs. This component consists of a brief description concerning student development aspects which need optimum guidance and counseling intervention. The description is also formulated based on the abstraction of related empirical findings and exhausted theoretical-conceptual analyses. The formulation is presented in terms of some essential pointers which shall become empirical and conceptual bases for further development of guidance contents. Research findings show that there are 10 aspects of primary and secondary students' developmental task and 11 aspects of senior and higher education.

Third, objectives of Guidance Program. The objectives of guidance and counseling program and services are formulated in accordance with

the vision of guidance nature, guidance program missions, and characteristics of student development, needs and expectations.

Fourth, contents of Guidance Program and Services. Referring to developmental model there are three main clusters of student need and problems considered as required content of guidance program and services: (a) General items that should be included in guidance services for all students in related schools or universities for the purpose of developing students' skills of living and effective conducts. These items become the component of *Basic or General Services*; (b) Items related to the students' present concerns and needs which require immediate and specific guidance and counseling interventions. The items become the component of *Responsive Services*; (c) Items concerning students' specific needs to understand their own personal development. They become the component of *Individual Personal Planning services*.

Fifth, System Support. This component consists of items aimed at the organization of guidance system management as a supporting factor for the improvement of guidance and counseling services. They include: (a) Guidance program development related to and integrated with the whole educational and instructional program of the school or university; (b) Professional staff development, consisting of training and continuing education of available personnel and or recruitment of new professional guidance personnel; (c) Utilization of related societal resources, including resources available neighboring relevant institutions; (d) Development and or reorganization of related policies, procedures, and guidelines of guidance program implementation.

The Set of Outcome Model

The outcome model consists of three main units. The first is Students' developmental tasks inventory of elementary, junior high, senior high school, and university levels. The inventory was developed based on a matching construct of Havighurst's developmental tasks and Loevinger's model of ego development. This instrument has been standardized and developed in a computerized system so that it enables users to proceed and analyze data of students' developmental tasks. This computerized instrument is a segment of the quality improvement of guidance and counseling management system at school and university levels.

Frame work of guidance and counseling for every school level has been developed by referring to general model. In short, the framework could be seen in the following tables. Learning package was developed based on topics of students' needs and growths. This package is an example for counselor, and in its implementation a counselor can improve his own way in regard to his analysis on students' development.

Quality and Management Improvement

Quality improvement of guidance and counseling services in elementary school, especially in lower classes, proceeds in the integration of guidance and counseling services into teaching learning activities that can create conducive atmosphere for the development of intellectual and non-intellectual aspects in the same time. Research findings show that meaningful initial learning experiences which are developed to the lower class facilitate students to be more active in the learning process, develop social-personal-emotional-intellectual competencies, and build up positive study habits and attitudes. (Ahman, 1998; Riksa, 1999).

In junior high school setting, the study reveals that, to the teacher's interpretation and awareness, guidance must be developed on the basis of students' needs and school's objective conditions in order that guidance and counseling services become relevant to students' needs (Suharto, 1998). Quality improvement in senior high schools is marked with an increasing intensity of the use of guidance and counseling services by students based on their own self interest, and with the increase on students' developmental task achievement (Nurihsan, 1998). In the vocational school setting, the quality improvement is recognized in the students' positive attitudes and awareness to exploit guidance and counseling services and counselor's awareness to pay attention to students' development as a basis for program development (Yusuf, 1998). Quality improvement in higher education is marked in the emerging strong concerns from the leaders, lecturers, and academic advisors to perform guidance and counseling services (Yuwono, 1998).

The management improvement in guidance and counseling generally occurs in: (a) Computerized information system of data of students' development and environment. The use of computer in the development of information management system does help counselor in running the program; (b) A realistic, proactive, and accommodative guidance and coun-

seling program in response to the students' needs and problems, school environment, family, and society; (c) The availability of guidance materials which are relevant to students' needs; (d) The improvement of school staff involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and making follow up services; (e) The development of work mechanism and cooperation between counselor and school principal, teacher/ lecturer, other staffs, and parents.

Kindergarten and Special Education Setting

Since this study was limited to primary school level to higher education, extension of studies for the purposes of testing the applicability of models in broader educational setting was conducted in the third phase. Referring to the outcome models extension of the study has been conducted by developing and implementing program of guidance and counseling in Kindergarten and Special Education. The developed program in Kindergarten focused on developing child's social behavior. Findings show that parenting, guidance given by teacher, and peer group interaction were determinant of child's social behavior development. Hypothetical guidance program of child's social behavior development has been developed based on empirical findings and theoretical analysis through teachers-researcher collaboration. Some relevant topics of developing child's social behavior have been formulated derived from the actual child's social behavior (Syaodih, 1999).

Some studies in special education setting were focused on developing program and helping students (blinds, cerebral palsy, and mentally retarded) to be independent, to do self care, to develop vocational skills. Empirical evidence shows that there was positive students' development of independency, self care, and vocational awareness (Nandang, Effendi and Astat, 1999).

General Impacts and Sustainability of the Models

Impacts of the models were inferred from school counselor and principals rating in the matter of (1) applicability of the program, (2) teachers', school principal's, and staff's concern and participation, (3) relevance of the program to students' need and school program, (4) school counselor's

readiness to continue the model implementation. The raters gave high score to all components; it was 4.60 in the scale of five.

The main question addressed in the post study was to what extent the sustainability of the models would occur. Although this point was not the main concern of the study, limited study has been conducted in tested junior high school. The results show that school counselor, staff, and principal had a good comprehension about the model and its implementation. School counselor saw that the model was realistic, relevant to students' needs and development, and manageable because of simple administration. Teachers and counselors agreed that they had high possibilities to continue model implementation after the end of the studies; the score was 4.0 in the scale of five. However, it is not a final conclusion of the sustainability of the models. In several things there were school counselors' dependence on the researcher's attendance in implementing the model.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

There are several things that need to be considered in implementing and disseminating this model. The existence of this model is not as a substitute of the existing one as the implementation of the model meets the field testing at the same time as guidance and counseling which are based on 1994 curriculum are working normally. Hence, the implementation of the outcome model requires a flexibility on policies from school principals.

The process of implementing the model requires a learning process and a direct involvement of school principals, teachers, and counselors. This implies that it necessitates a learning process on the basis of experiential learning and takes place in collaborative ways involving school authorities and facilitators.

This model does not require counselor to do a rigid administrative work and fill completely the uniform standardized forms with students' data but it makes counselor to note process or/and outcome that can be flexibly done in response to the students' needs and development. However, it does require a well planned evaluation process to know the students' development. The set of inventory resulted from this study can be used for understanding and evaluating students' development and made it as a basis of program development and services.

Field testing reveals that learning process for teachers and counselors on the basis of experience and collaboration proceeds between research tested school and the surrounding schools. Hence, the dissemination of the model will be more effective by charging a particular school with responsibility to implement the model and the surrounding schools learn and absorb the innovation from it.

This model is open in nature but consistently refers to formulated frame work. Adjustment, development, and model restoration are crucial things to do and this becomes the moving force to make guidance and counseling better in quality.

In accordance with point 5, this model enables teacher and counselor to possess high flexibility in implementing it, but it should coincide with the strong commitment to the system and procedure required by this model. It means that school's and counselor's autonomy becomes a determinant factor to the success of this model.

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