

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL ONLINE COUNSELING

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Abstract

Support in online learning is a significant matter and realized as active participation in children learning process. It can be in form of assistance, motivation, and learning facilities provision. However, it seemed parents did not support online counseling services because they were worried of having their children getting addicted to the internet, online game, and social media use. Thus, this study attempted to follow up the recommendation of a previous study regarding the identification of parents' support for a school policy on online counseling services implementation. The study used online survey method and statistical analysis technique to analyze 350 respondents' data consisting of students' parents all over Semarang Regency. It was found that generally

students' parents had different understanding levels of online counseling given to their children. Therefore, their support was diverse as well.

Keywords: role of parents, support, online counseling

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemi has affected educational aspects. In this situation, learning process is carried out through all limitations, and requires the role of parents as a key aspect to the learning (Putra & Shofaria, 2020; Suhendro, 2020). Parents are involved in preparing supporting online learning equipment by providing various media such as smartphone and handy talky to access *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, *Zoom*, *WhatsApp*, and other learning platforms (Anugrahana, 2020; Riyandi et al., 2020; Suhada et al., 2020). In other words, parental support cannot be separated from the implementation of education.

Parental support is defined as active participation and involvement in learning process, including giving motivation, assistance and learning media facilities (Fitria, 2016; Miftakhi & Aridansah, 2020; Padmadewi et al., 2018). This pandemi situation also demands guidance and counseling teachers to utilize technology in school counseling services. However, the facts show that not all parents fully support this kind of counseling service. They are afraid of having their children getting addicted to the internet, online game, and social media (Khasanah et al., 2020; Y. P. Nugraha et al., 2021; Savitri & Winingsih, 2021). In short, changes in counseling service medium through smartphone apparently worries parents about their children's behavior.

Parents not only worry about the addiction, but also the inability to provide learning facilities (Atsani, 2020; Nugroho, 2020). This causes another obstacle in the implementation of online school counseling apart from the insufficient supporting learning equipment at school (Gunawan, et al, 2020). Another study revealed that parents choose to put counseling services aside as mental health services in schools and prioritize the learning process (Muzni et al., 2021; R. A. Nugraha, 2020). Regarding the previous explanation, this study strived for following up the recommendation of a previous study, namely identifying parental support for school policies on online counseling services (Kong, 2018).

Framework of the Study

By referring to the recommendation of the previous study, the researchers found several issues regarding the role of parents in supporting online counseling implementation and the obstacles. The previous study concludes that parents are responsible for monitoring and giving support through the use of technology as means of children learning media at home. However, it seemed that the technological support was not given by parents due to their worry about its addiction. Thus, the present study attempted to reveal the parental support for school policy on online counseling implementation.

THEORITICAL REVIEWS

Online Counseling During the Covid-19 Pandemi

Lately, learning process experienced a significant change from face-to-face meeting to online learning due to the emergency situation caused by COVID-19 pandemi. This online learning has actually been proposed since the 1990s by some experts due to cultural changes (Barak, Klein, & Proudfoot, 2009). National Board for Certified Counselors define online counseling as a professional counseling practice in which clients and counselors are at different location or remote and use electronic media to communicate through the internet (Bloom, 1998). Online counseling offers unique benefits, such as greater accessibility and flexibility (Glasgeen and Campbell 2009). Accessibility becomes the main concern since not all clients can access the services because of particular factors, including geography, mobility, or time (Oravec, 2000). In line with this, Sutijono (2018) explains that the implementation of online counseling via *Facebook, Instagram, Skype, Twitter, and WhatsApp* is easy to apply, has practical privacy, and accessible from anywhere at any time. Hence, online counseling puts forward flexible time efficiency to reach. Previous studies have presented findings related to the effectiveness of online counseling, such as a study by Reza & Mulawarman (2021) which investigated the effectiveness of online group counseling with behavioral approach to reduce online game addiction in students.

Parental Support in Online Counseling

The success of online counseling in school is inseparable from the positive role of parents towards the online counseling services. In the scope of school, parents are structured, collaborative, and problem-solving partners between counselors (in this case is guidance and counseling teacher) and one or more parents who have consultations (Sheridan et al., 1996). It implies that the role of parents in counseling is interactive and constructive with some experts (Idol et al., 1994) characterized by collaborative efforts and common responsibility and accountability (Reschly & Christenson, 2012). Accordingly, parental support for online counseling is a responsible attitude towards the success of online counseling to empower students in achieving developmental tasks. Besides, parental support would add more value to students' success in the field of education.

METHODS

This study used descriptive statistics method with a survey approach. It is an analysis technique which gives general description of the average characteristic values of each answer in scale questions. In addition, the data of this study were collected through online survey using *google form* distributed to students' parents. For the sample, it used 350 students' parents in Semarang Regency.

In terms of scale, this study used as an adopted instrument called parental perception of e-learning developed by Kong (2018) to discover the students' parental support for counseling. The examples of item are 1) I support the sustainable development of online counseling; 2) I support and involve in my children online counseling at home. Meanwhile, to analyze the collected data of parental support for online counseling services, the researchers used descriptive statistical analysis.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Analysis

Of the 350 students' parents' initial data, the researchers performed an analysis using IBM SPSS version 24. All data, covering gender, educational level from Junior High School (SMP), Senior High School (SMA), and Vocational High School (SMK) can be seen in table 1. Additionally, the overall results of descriptive analysis of parental perception can be seen in table 2. This table discusses the data of mean, median, and standard deviation.

Table 1. Sample of the Study Data

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	141	59.7
Female	209	40.3
Educational Level		
SMP	125	35.7
SMA	171	48.9
SMK	54	15.4

Table 1 presents the sample of this study as many as 350 respondents, consisting of 141 or 59.7% male and 209 or 40.3% female. In terms of educational level, the data were dominated by parents whose children studied at SMA as many as 171 respondents or 48.9%, 125 respondents or 35.7% at SMP, and 54 respondents or 15.4% at SMK. These data could explain all educational level since it covered parents' whose children studied at SMP until SMPA or SMK.

Table 2. Statistical Results

		NO 1	NO 2	NO 3	NO 4	NO 5	NO 6	NO 7
N	<i>Valid</i>	350	350	350	350	350	350	349
	<i>Missing</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Mean</i>		3,30	3,35	3,25	3,55	3,65	2,56	3,56
<i>Median</i>		3,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	4,00

Std. Deviation 0,957 0,797 0,853 0,780 0,767 0,867 0,780

Answer	Parental Support for Online Counseling Activity						
Strongly Agree	8,6%	6,0%	4,9%	7,7%	10,3%	1,4%	8,0%
Agree	36,0%	36,0%	35,1%	49,4%	52,0%	11,1%	48,1%
Neutral	35,7%	46,0%	42,6%	34,3%	31,1%	38,9%	37,8%
Disagree	16,3%	10,9%	15,1%	7,7%	6,0%	38,9%	4,0%
Strongly Disagree	3,4%	1,1%	2,3%	0,9%	0,65	9,7%	2,0%

Table 2 shows that the aspect of parental support for the implementation of online counseling was varied. However, the value of mean in the table indicated low parental support. It implied that the parents did not fully support the implementation of online counseling (item no.1). Next, the parents seemed to object the cost charged for the online counseling (item no.6). It might be caused by the low technological skills by the parents (item no.3). Thus, the parents worried about the introduction to online counseling services from school (item no.7).

Furthermore, the data presented in the table above were collected from the parental perception of online counseling services (level of support) developed by Kong (2018). Some of the items are: (a) I support the sustainable development of online counseling, (b) I am curious about what my children do during online counseling, (c) I know how to utilize technology for online counseling services, (d) I support and involve in my children online counseling at home, (e) I think online counseling at home or school is safe for my children, (f) I think parents should pay the fee of online counseling, and (g) I still need to be wary of the introduction of online counseling services in classroom and at school.

DISCUSSION

The Covid-19 pandemi has greatly impacted on every aspect of human life, including education. Due to this situation, the government quickly diverted any activity that has the potential to cause direct physical contact. All levels of the government from the central government to local governments provide policies for every state institution to carry out work from home (WFH), including teaching and learning activities in schools.

The policy aimed to reduce the spread of Covid-19 is by implementing distance learning (Bestiantono et al., 2020).

Online learning requires the role of several media as means of supporting distance learning process, such as *zoom*, *google classroom*, educational television, *ruang guru* and other online learning applications (Nilam, et al., 2020). At the same time, the pandemi situation encourages teachers to innovate and change the learning pattern from face-to-face to remote teaching (Anugraha, 2020). Similarly, counselors as professionals in counseling services need to do adapt to face significant challenges to conduct online counseling (König et al., 2020).

Besides online learning media, students need support from their parents, especially in the implementation of online guidance and counseling services. It is because in the scope of school, parents hold a strategic role as structured, collaborative, and problem-solving partners between counselors and other parents who have consultations (Sheridan et al., 1996). In this way, counselors' ability to provide positive information to parents will affect parents' understanding and support (Tsuei & Hsu, 2019).

According to the data, the level of parental support for online counseling were varied. Some supported this activity, but some others did not because of several factors they considered, namely costs, facilities needed, proficiency in using technology, a sense of unguaranteed security, and the level of parental awareness of online counseling services. There were also some parents who chose to be neutral. This one was considered by the researchers as the realization of parents' hesitation or inability to make choice as proper support they gave to their children.

Limitations

During the investigation, this study had some limitations which can be concerns for the future researchers. First, the sample of this study was not set to represent the national scale and be specific since it only covered parents whose children studied at the Junior High School and Senior High School or Vocational High School in Semarang Regency. Second, the researchers experienced difficulties in collecting the respondents' data because it took approximately two months, while the information given did not fully

represent the real thoughts of the respondents. This happened because of respondents' different understanding and perspectives. Another difficulty came from the online data collection which disabled the researchers to reach all levels of society so that the collected data were as many as 350. This number was far from the number of initial targets.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was designed to determine the parental support for the implementation of online counseling services from school. Generally, the findings indicate that the support of students' parents for the online counseling services is varied. Some of them support the development of online counseling, but some other do not. There are also parents who are neutral which makes the support is increasingly diverse.

Regarding the above conclusions, the researchers recommend guidance and counseling teachers to improve the implementation of online counseling services during this COVID-19 pandemi and collaborate with students' parents to share and achieve the common goals of these services. Moreover, the guidance and counseling teachers are suggested to identify weaknesses of the online counseling services to have better implementation in the future. The last, the future studies are expected to use the findings of the present study to conduct new investigations and develop new online counseling services media which are more user friendly to both students and parents. Also, the future researchers can examine the effectiveness of the online counseling services given to the students during this Covid-19 pandemi.

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