

Increasing the Ability of Psychological Testers in Counseling Guidance Students

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ABSTRACT

The role of counseling and guidance professionals in modern education has become increasingly vital, particularly in addressing the diverse psychological and emotional needs of students. Among the critical competencies required for effective counseling is the ability to administer and interpret psychological tests, which are essential tools for assessing various psychological domains such as intelligence, personality, and emotional functioning. This study explores the significance of enhancing the skills of counseling guidance students as psychological testers, focusing on theoretical foundations, practical applications, and the need for targeted training programs. The study employed a quantitative approach, assessing participants' skills through a series of tests conducted during a two-day training session. The training aimed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, offering students hands-on experience in administering and interpreting psychological tests. A total of 25 students participated in the training, and their performance was evaluated through written exams and practical tests. The results revealed that while most participants demonstrated a good understanding of the theoretical aspects, there were varying levels of proficiency in practical testing skills. The training proved effective in enhancing students' abilities, but it also highlighted the need for more structured and continuous practice to build confidence and competence. The findings suggest that targeted training programs are crucial for preparing counseling guidance students to meet the demands of their future professional roles. This study underscores the importance of investing in the professional development of counseling guidance students through comprehensive training programs. By equipping students with the necessary skills to administer and interpret psychological tests, these programs can improve the quality of counseling services and contribute to better psychological outcomes for individuals.

Keywords: Psychological Tester, Guidance Counseling, Students

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era of education, the role of counseling and guidance professionals has become increasingly critical in addressing the diverse psychological and emotional needs of students. Among the various competencies required for effective counseling, the ability to administer and interpret psychological tests stands out as particularly essential. Psychological testing is a systematic process used to evaluate and measure individual differences in various psychological domains, such as intelligence, personality, aptitude, and emotional functioning. This introduction will delve into the significance of enhancing the capabilities of counseling guidance students as psychological testers, exploring the theoretical foundations, practical implications, and the necessity for targeted training programs.

Psychological tests serve as indispensable tools in the arsenal of counseling professionals. They provide objective data that can be used to understand and diagnose a range of psychological conditions, thereby facilitating the development of effective intervention strategies. According to Swerdik (2010), psychological tests encompass a wide array of assessments designed to measure intelligence, personality traits, performance, and social interactions. These tests are critical for providing a holistic understanding of an individual's mental health and can significantly influence the direction of counseling interventions. The role of psychological testing in counseling extends beyond mere diagnosis. It involves the continuous assessment of an individual's progress, helping to tailor counseling approaches to meet specific needs. This dynamic process is fundamental to ensuring

that counseling remains responsive and effective, addressing the evolving psychological states of individuals.

The administration of psychological tests requires a high level of expertise and professionalism. Testers, or examiners, play a pivotal role in ensuring that the testing process is conducted with precision and integrity. As noted by Embretson (2001), the responsibilities of a tester include not only administering the test but also interpreting the results in a manner that is both accurate and meaningful. This dual responsibility underscores the need for testers to possess a deep understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the tests they administer, as well as practical skills in their execution. Professional testers must be adept at creating a standardized testing environment, which is essential for obtaining reliable and valid results. This involves maintaining consistency in the administration of tests, managing the testing conditions, and ensuring that all participants receive the same instructions and support. The ability to interpret test results accurately is equally important, as this interpretation forms the basis for subsequent counseling interventions.

Despite the critical importance of psychological testing, many counseling guidance students face significant challenges in developing the requisite skills. The complexity of psychological assessments, coupled with the need for precise interpretation, can be daunting for students. Pratiwi et al. (2022) highlight that while theoretical knowledge is imparted through formal coursework, practical skills are often lacking. This gap between theory and practice can hinder the effectiveness of future counselors in real-world settings. One of the primary challenges is the limited exposure to practical testing scenarios during academic training. Students may have a solid understanding of the concepts and methodologies underlying psychological tests but may struggle to apply this knowledge in practice. This can lead to a lack of confidence and proficiency in administering and interpreting tests, ultimately affecting the quality of counseling services provided.

To address these challenges, it is imperative to develop targeted training programs that enhance the abilities of counseling guidance students as psychological testers. Such programs should be designed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, providing students with hands-on experience in administering and interpreting psychological tests. Pratiwi et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of regular and structured training sessions to improve the skills of students. Effective training programs should incorporate a blend of theoretical instruction and practical exercises. Students should be given opportunities to practice administering tests in simulated environments, receive feedback on their performance, and engage in discussions about the nuances of test interpretation. Additionally, training should cover the ethical considerations and professional standards associated with psychological testing, ensuring that students are well-prepared to uphold these standards in their practice.

A key component of effective training programs is the incorporation of psychodiagnostics, which involves the use of psychological tests to diagnose mental and emotional disorders. Psychodiagnostics provides a framework for understanding the complex interplay between various psychological factors and their impact on an individual's overall functioning. By training students in psychodiagnostics, they can develop a more nuanced understanding of psychological assessments and their implications for counseling. Practical training in psychodiagnostics should include case studies and real-world scenarios that challenge students to apply their knowledge in diagnosing and developing intervention strategies. This experiential learning approach can help students build confidence and competence in using psychological tests as diagnostic tools. Moreover, it prepares them to handle the diverse and complex cases they are likely to encounter in their professional practice.

Investing in the training of counseling guidance students as psychological testers has far-reaching implications for the quality of counseling services. Well-trained testers can provide more accurate and comprehensive assessments, leading to better-informed counseling interventions. This, in turn, enhances the overall effectiveness of counseling, helping individuals achieve better psychological and emotional outcomes. Enhanced training also contributes to the professional development of counseling guidance students. By equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to administer and interpret psychological tests, training programs help prepare students for successful careers in counseling. This professional growth not only benefits the individual students but also strengthens the counseling profession as a whole. The ability to administer and interpret psychological tests is a critical competency for counseling guidance professionals. However, many

students face challenges in developing these skills due to the complexity of psychological assessments and the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. To address these challenges, targeted training programs that incorporate psychodiagnostics and provide hands-on experience are essential. By enhancing the abilities of counseling guidance students as psychological testers, these programs can improve the quality of counseling services and contribute to the professional development of future counselors. Investing in such training is crucial for ensuring that counseling guidance students are well-prepared to meet the diverse and evolving needs of the individuals they serve.

METHOD

The implementation of this event uses a quantitative approach by looking at the total score of each participant. This activity will take place from 17-18 April 2024, from 08.00-15.00 WIT. There were 25 participants. The implementation of this training will begin with a meeting of the presenters, followed by the distribution of their respective tasks. The speaker will provide background material from Psychology and Guidance Counseling. After that, the speaker will prepare the material to be implemented. The training will go through several initial stages, namely:

- a. This initial briefing is to prepare prospective participants after the training. The speaker also explained what needs to be prepared regarding the training contract
- b. Prospective participants who agree to take part in the training will be given the opportunity to fill out a short essay about their desire to take part in this training (letter of motivation). This is done as a form of participants' commitment to implementing the activity

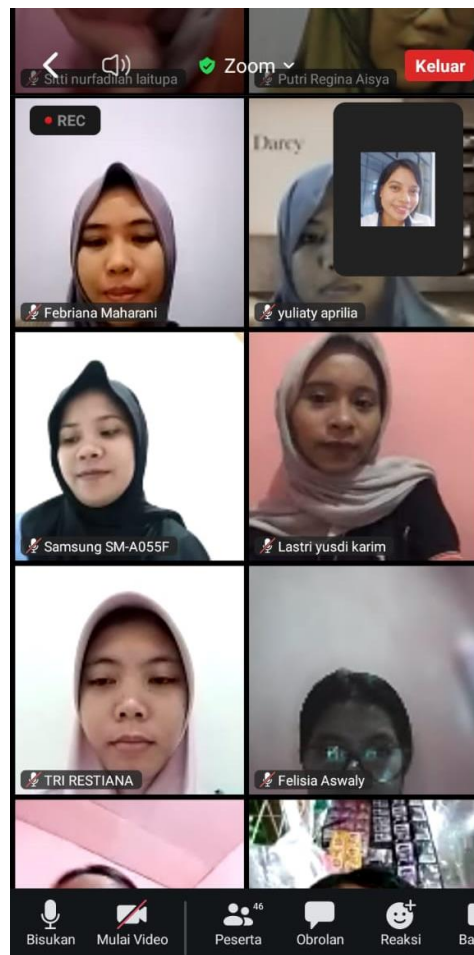


Figure 1. Preparatory Briefing for Participating in Training

After passing the initial stages, participants will enter the training implementation. This implementation will last approximately 5 hours over 2 days. In each material, participants will be given material followed by practicing together. Participants will also be given modules and workbooks. After participants have finished following the material and practice, they will be tested again by choosing the test themselves. Once finished, they will be given grades and feedback from the presenter.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This activity was attended by 25 participants. From the table above, it shows that the number of training participants was 25 students, with 7 male students and 18 female students.

Table 1. Number of Participants by Gender

Gender	Amount	%
Man	7	28
Woman	18	72



Figure 2. Knowledge Test

This is a written exam carried out on 25 guidance and counseling students. In this training, the assessment uses Krikpatrick's categorization (in Noe, 2010), namely the results obtained by participants are at level 2 (learning), which focuses on new knowledge, skills and attitudes. Can also reach level 3 (behavior), focusing on improving expected behavior at work. Based on UNPATTI academic guidelines, the distribution of knowledge scores can be categorized as follows:

Table 1. Scores based on UNPATTI Academic Guidelines

Grade	Bobot	Nilai Bawah	Nilai Atas	Keterangan
A	4,00	85,00	100,00	SANGAT BAIK
B	3,00	70,00	84,99	BAIK
C	2,00	55,00	69,99	CUKUP
D	1,00	40,00	54,99	KURANG
E	0,00	0,00	39,99	TIDAK LULUS

Selain melaksanakan tes pengetahuan umum, pelatihan ini juga melakukan tes kemampuan praktis individu secara mandiri

**Figure 3. Individual Psychodiagnostic Competency Practice Test.**

The following is a picture of the implementation of psychodiagnostic competency practice. This practice is to test your abilities as a tester. From the percentage value above, we can adjust the value of the participant's knowledge results

Table 2. Participants' Knowledge Assessment

Categorization of Values	Total	Percentage (%)
A	6	24
B	18	72
C	1	4
D	0	0

In order to understand participants, they are given a written test of 25 questions related to the material. The material presented is in the form of: test times, instructions and other technical matters. The written exam is carried out after all material and practical sessions have been completed. From the table above, it is found that 6 people or 24% have A or very good grades, while the highest position is B, totaling 18 people or 72%. From the results above, it is known that not all of the participants understood the material very well, this is known from only 6 people who got an A grade. One person got an E grade, according to interviews conducted because he did not understand the material, but was embarrassed and confused about asking questions. to the presenter. This can be used as a reference for the presenters to evaluate the overall performance. After testing understanding, students take a practice test. This test is obtained from the speaker's assessment, using the same categorization.

Table 3. Practice Assessment

Categorization of Values	Total	Percentage (%)
A	1	4
B	20	80
C	5	20
D	0	0

In the data above, it was found that 20 students had the ability to practice as testers with good grades. Only 1 student had very good grades, and 5 of them had fair grades. This shows that not all have good grades in carrying out diagnostic practices. After being confirmed through interviews, some of them experienced difficulties in practicing because they were embarrassed, nervous and some also admitted that they had not mastered these skills well.

The advantage of this training is that it is able to reveal students' abilities personally. This cannot be found when they are in class. This training gives them new abilities, so that they can increase their knowledge to the practical abilities of students. Weaknesses This training takes quite a long time, carried out in several meetings to give them time to evaluate their work performance.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive training program aimed at enhancing the capabilities of counseling guidance students as psychological testers successfully identified the strengths and weaknesses in both theoretical understanding and practical application among the participants. While the majority of students demonstrated proficiency in theoretical knowledge, as evidenced by the higher number of students achieving B grades in knowledge assessments, the practical aspect of psychodiagnostic testing revealed areas requiring further development, with only a few students excelling. The training highlighted the importance of hands-on experience in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, emphasizing the need for ongoing practice and targeted feedback to build confidence and competence. The program's ability to uncover individual student challenges, such as nervousness and lack of mastery in practical skills, underscores the critical role of tailored training in preparing future counselors to meet the complex demands of psychological assessment in their professional practice.

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