

DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES IN PLANNING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic has necessitated the adaptation of daily life, including education, to coexist with the virus, commonly termed the "new normal." This study investigates the implementation of needs assessment activities for counseling programs in Palangka Raya City Public High School during the Covid-19 pandemic era. Interviews with key personnel reveal that while there is recognition of the importance of needs assessment, practical challenges hinder its effective execution. Guidance counselors often resort to using previous years' programs due to difficulties in data collection and analysis, resulting in counseling services that may not align with student needs. To address this, operational guidelines are proposed, emphasizing the utilization of technology for needs analysis activities. Expert and practitioner feedback underscores the importance of adapting assessment models to counselor capabilities and school contexts. Enhancing student-centered needs assessment practices is crucial for improving counseling program efficacy and supporting holistic student development.

Keywords: covid-19 pandemic, needs assessment, counseling programs, education adaptation

INTRODUCTION

The presence of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic in February 2020 has rapidly changed the way of life in Indonesia in various aspects such as economics, social, health, education, and religion. The Covid-19 virus originating from China quickly spread on a large scale and caused many casualties. Efforts to find an effective vaccine for the Covid-19 virus have not yet been successful. This necessitates humans to adapt and coexist with the Covid-19 virus in their daily lives, commonly referred to as the "new normal." Coexisting with the Covid-19 virus means that humans can carry out normal activities under the condition of strictly following health protocols. Commonly implemented rules include wearing masks at all times, frequently washing hands, and maintaining social distancing. Specifically, rules such as prohibiting gatherings of large numbers of people in enclosed spaces and traveling outside the area without urgent needs are enforced to suppress the spread of the Covid-19 virus until a vaccine is found.

In the field of education, the new normal involves discontinuing face-to-face learning activities for areas classified as yellow and red zones. Areas classified as green zones may be granted permission to conduct face-to-face learning, but with strict procedures and approval from local authorities and the Covid-19 task force. This situation forces schools in yellow and red zones to conduct distance learning or study from home. However, this approach is not without problems. Many issues arise, such as the unpreparedness of facilities and infrastructure related to learning media, unequal availability or quality of communication networks, inadequate learning media, and many teachers and students who lack understanding of technology use in education. These issues lead to suboptimal learning outcomes, including students' lack of understanding of materials, decreased motivation to learn, and increased stress or frustration in participating in online learning. Similarly, the same issues affect the services provided by school guidance counselors. The role of guidance counselors in schools is crucial in helping students not be disrupted by personal, social, learning, and career problems so that they can optimally receive educational services at school.

The role of guidance and counseling in schools aims to prepare students to participate in the learning process optimally without being hindered by personal, social, learning, and career issues. Guidance and counseling services provided at schools are oriented towards the needs of students through programs planned each year or semester. Assessing these needs plays a crucial role in program development, as adequate assessment results serve as the basis for determining appropriate educational interventions, including appropriate learning guidance (Tri Anni, 2012). Before the program is implemented, a needs assessment activity must be conducted to understand the characteristics and issues of the students, ensuring that the planned program aligns with the students' needs.

Based on interviews with the Chairperson of the School Guidance Counselors Forum (MGBK) at Palangka Raya High School, it was found that guidance counselors struggle to conduct needs assessments because many of them are not accustomed to collecting student data using technology such as Google Forms, Google Meet, Zoom Cloud Meetings, Mentimeter, and others. As a result of this difficulty, student needs assessments are often done by simply copying and pasting programs from previous years. This practice leads to a lack of synchronization between student needs and the program because the programs are not based on the actual needs of the students. Therefore, the researchers concluded that this problem needs to be addressed immediately, and one of the strategies is to create operational guidelines. Operational guidelines are designed to assist guidance counselors in carrying out their core tasks systematically and are detailed in various aspects (Rachman, Rachman, Sugianto, & Setiawan, 2020). In this research, guidelines are created to facilitate guidance counselors in utilizing technology to conduct needs analysis activities as the basis for developing counseling programs at school. It is hoped that with the existence of these guidelines, an ideal counseling program can be created where there is alignment between student needs and the counseling program. The objectives of this research are to determine the implementation of needs analysis activities during the Covid-19 pandemic era at Palangka Raya City Public High School and to understand the guidelines for needs analysis activities during the Covid-19 pandemic era at Palangka Raya City Public High School.

Student assistance activities are planned activities based on needs assessment measures that are realized in the form of counseling programs. Needs assessment is one of the stages in the development of accountable counseling programs (Gibson and Mitchell, 2011). Needs assessment is not only a speculative process based on opinions but also a fact-finding activity to meet the real needs of students, thus enabling the development of counseling programs. Needs assessment aims to identify the actual conditions of students, which will serve as the basis for planning guidance and counseling programs. The results of student/counselor needs assessments are described in narrative form as empirical bases for guidance counselors or counselors in planning counseling programs at school.

There are six objectives of assessment according to Gladding (in Wahyuni, 2016), including: (1) obtaining information about the problems presented by the counselee and other related issues; (2) Recognizing control and contributing variables related to the problem; (3) Determining the counselee's goals/hopes as a result of counseling; (4) Collecting basic data to be compared with subsequent data to assess and evaluate the progress of the counselee and the effects of the treatment strategies used; (5) Educating and motivating the counselee by sharing the counselor's perspective on the situation, increasing the counselee's acceptance of treatment, and contributing to changes resulting from therapy. (6) Using the information obtained from the counselee to plan effective care strategies.

The steps in conducting counseling needs assessment include: (1) Feasibility study phase; (2) Determining the scope of the program phase; (3) Consultation phase for proposed counseling program; (4) Budget preparation phase; (5) Using instruments in conducting assessment; (6) Implementing assessment instruments in collaboration with psychologists; (7) Available facilities and infrastructure at the school; (8) Guidance teacher/BK experience (Hikmawati, 2016). Assessment forms include two types: tests

(achievement tests, interest and personality tests) and non-tests (DCM, AUM, interviews, sociometry, observation, questionnaires, and ITP) (Wahyuni, 2016). Assessment steps include: a) identifying the data needed for counseling and guidance program development; b) selecting instruments to be used; and c) collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting the assessment data (DITJEN GTK, 2016). The steps are further described as follows: a) Identifying the data needed for the development of counseling and guidance service programs. The initial step in needs assessment is determining the data to be measured/disclosed for the purpose of developing counseling and guidance service programs. Data that needs to be disclosed include information about developmental tasks, problems, and achievements of students/counselees. b) Choosing data collection instruments according to needs. Data collection instruments that can be used in needs assessment include (1) problem-focused instruments, such as General Problem Disclosure Tools (AUM-U), Learning Problem Disclosure Tools (AUM-PTSDL), Problem Checklist (DCM), (2) instruments with the SKKPD approach, namely the Inventory of Developmental Tasks (ITP), (3) instruments with a field service goal approach (personal, social, learning, and career), which can be in the form of questionnaires, observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and sociometric questionnaires. These instruments can be selected according to the needs of counseling and guidance program planning activities. c) Collecting, Processing, Analyzing, and Interpreting Needs Assessment Data. Data collection is carried out using the chosen instruments. Data collection, processing, analysis, and interpretation are done according to the manual. Each standard data collection instrument has a manual. If the instrument used is not standard, then data processing, analysis, and interpretation use a self-prepared manual. This comprehensive assessment process ensures that counseling and guidance programs are tailored to the specific needs of students, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of educational support services at schools.

METHOD

This research method employs a mixed-method approach. The strategy used in developing this model follows the approach proposed by Borg, Gall, and Gall (Sugiyono, 2018), which is research and development (R&D). The steps involved in the development research typically include: (1) preliminary study, (2) planning, (3) development of a hypothetical model, (4) review of the hypothetical model, (5) revision, (6) limited testing, (7) revision based on test results, (8) broader testing, (9) final model revision, and (10) dissemination and socialization. However, in this research, these ten steps are modified into four stages, adjusted to the research's focus on model development. The visual representation of the development steps can be seen in Figure 1.

Data collection techniques in this study utilize Interview techniques aimed at exploring information about the implementation of needs assessment in Palangka Raya City Public High School, and Documentation aimed at obtaining data related to theories, articles, instruments, and related documents used by schools in conducting needs assessment. Regarding data analysis steps, interpretation methods, and conclusions, the researcher will undertake: (1) Data Reduction, which involves selecting, categorizing, directing, discarding, and organizing data in such a way that conclusions can be drawn. (2) Data Presentation, which presents a set of structured information that allows for conclusion drawing or descriptive-analytical taking by detailing all concepts relevant to the research discussion. (3) Drawing Conclusions involves the comprehensive portrayal of the researched object based on the combined organized information in an integrated form during data presentation (Suharsimi, 2013).

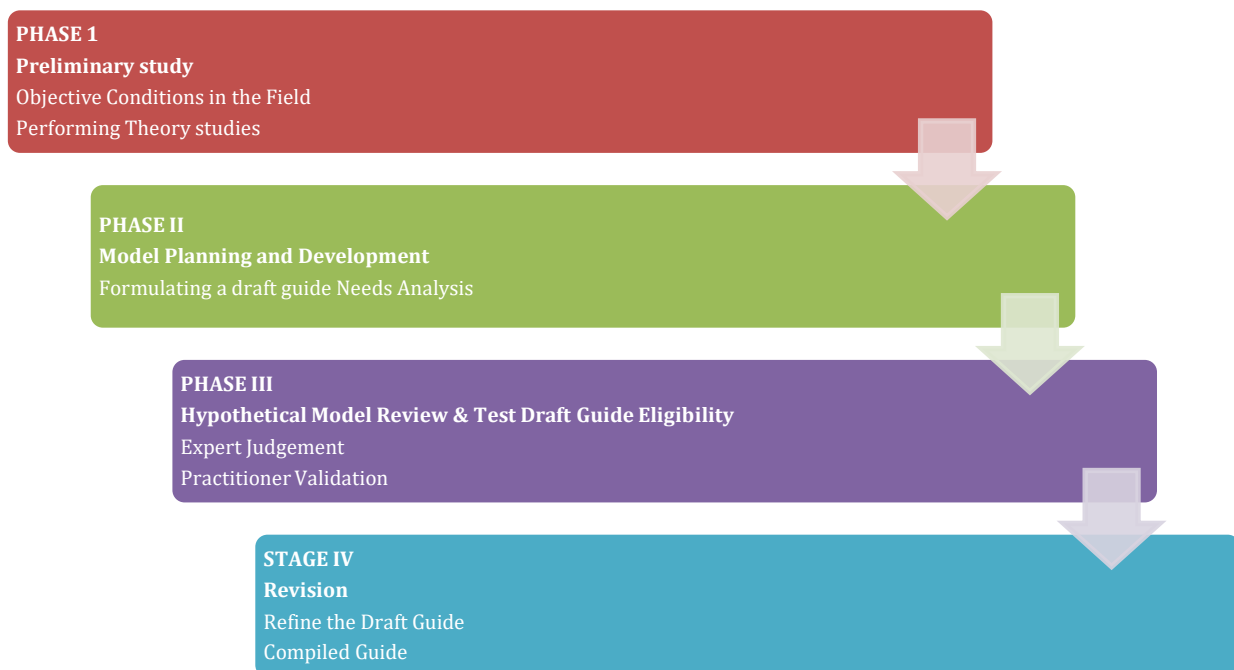


Figure 1. Research Development Flowchart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interviews in this research aim to explore information about the implementation of needs assessment conducted by guidance counselors in schools to plan counseling programs. The data sources for the interviews are 2 individuals: the Chairperson of the School Guidance Counselors Forum (MGBK) of Palangkaraya City High School and the Chairperson of the MGBK of Palangka Raya City Junior High School. The results of the interview discussions are as follows:

How is the identification of needed data in needs assessment conducted at the school?

The data required for creating counseling programs involve student problem data covering personal, career, social, and learning aspects. The data types required are quantitative or numerical to facilitate counselors or guidance teachers in depicting class profiles containing the average percentage of problems, the priority level of common problems in the class, or individual students.

How is the process of determining needs assessment instruments at the school?

The determination of needs assessment instruments at the school in developing counseling programs uses the Problem Checklist (DCM) and Problem Disclosure Tool (AUM). The reason for choosing these two instruments is that they yield data on personal, social, learning, and career problems experienced by students. This aims to provide guidance counselors with an overview of student problems, both general and personal, unlike using sociometry instruments, which tend to focus only on social issues.

How is the process of collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting data from needs assessment conducted?

Subsequent to determining the instruments, the next steps involve collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting data from needs assessments of students. However, these processes are not carried out by guidance counselors or counselors at schools. Counseling programs have so far relied solely on programs prepared in previous years. Reasons for not implementing these processes include: 1) high costs of obtaining instrument documents; 2) lengthy data analysis; 3) some schools lacking a counseling schedule,

making it difficult for guidance counselors to schedule time to collect data; and 4) many guidance counselors lacking skills in creating instruments using online survey applications such as Google Forms, Zoho Survey, Monkey, etc.

From the interview results, it can be concluded that the needs assessment implementation in schools in Palangka Raya City is not based on student needs. This leads to counseling services, strategies, and themes not aligning with student characteristics because counseling programs rely solely on programs from previous years. Furthermore, counseling services provided by guidance counselors can be considered ineffective because they are not targeted.

Table 1. Input and Suggestions from Expert and Practitioner Validators

<i>Expert Validators / Practitioners Validators</i>	<i>Feedback and suggestions</i>
Expert Validator I	In preparing the assessment guide model, needs should be adjusted to the ability of BK teachers / counselors and students. In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to the availability of facilities and infrastructure such as internet networks, quotas and mobile phones / computers.
Expert Validator II	It is expected to add the phenomenon of implementing needs assessment in planning BK programs in schools in Palangka Raya city. In the guide, please adjust to the habits of implementing BK Services in schools such as the use of questionnaire types.
Practitioner Validator I	In the guide it would be better to add practical steps in making an online survey. An online survey application that is familiar to BK teachers / counselors in schools is google forms.
Practitioner Validator II	To make it easier, the guide can be set a commonly used needs assessment instrument, namely the problem check list (DCM).

Expert and practitioner validation aims to seek advice or input regarding the hypothetical guideline model that has been developed. The experts requested for their opinions are lecturers with backgrounds in counseling psychology. The appointed expert validators by the researcher are Dr. Josep Dudi, M.Sc. as Expert Validator I and Drs. Sunaryo, A.I., M.Pd as Expert Validator II. Meanwhile, practitioners requested to provide input are guidance teachers who provide counseling services at schools. The appointed practitioner validators by the researcher are Veronica Octadewi Taradifa, S.Pd as Practitioner Validator I and Lara Eka Santi, S.Pd as Practitioner Validator II. Descriptions of the input and suggestions by expert and practitioner validators are presented in the table 1.

CONCLUSION

The research interviews explored how guidance counselors implement needs assessment to plan counseling programs in schools, with insights gathered from the Chairpersons of the School Guidance Counselors Forum (MGBK) from two key schools. Key findings include the need for data covering personal, career, social, and learning issues, often preferring quantitative data types for easier analysis. Schools commonly use tools like the Problem Checklist (DCM) and Problem Disclosure Tool (AUM) to assess student needs comprehensively. However, challenges such as cost, time constraints, and technical skills hinder effective implementation. Consequently, counseling services in Palangka Raya City lack a

student-centered approach, leading to ineffective outcomes. Expert and practitioner feedback emphasized the need to adjust assessment models to better suit counselors' capabilities and school realities. Overall, prioritizing student-centered needs assessment practices is crucial for enhancing counseling program efficacy and supporting students' holistic development and well-being.

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