

Supervision Model of Guidance and Counseling for Improving Senior High School Counselor's Professional Competences

Agus Taufiq*

Abstract : This study aims to provide an effective Supervision Model of Guidance and Counseling Model for improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence. MSBK is constructed from the framework of synthetic methodology of three counselor supervision approaches, which are psychotherapy, behavioral, and systemic approaches. This study is based on research and development approach. The data are collected and processed by implementing a synthesized method, and on-site effectiveness of the model is examined by semi-experimental method. In general, the results suggest that MSBK is effective in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence. Therefore, MSBK is recommended to use at the site as a continuous attempt to develop counselor's professional work.

Keywords : Supervision model, professional competence, guidance and counseling, and counselor.

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue about counselor's low quality works at school, especially in Senior High School (SMA), should be concerned by particular people, since guidance and counseling service from the counselor (guidance and counseling teacher) is an integral part of educational endeavor at school, in addition to other two; curriculum and learning processes from subject teachers, as well as management and supervision from the headmaster and supervisors. Those three systemic components of educational endeavor at school should be directed in synergy to achieve the objectives of national education.

In the context of achieving the objectives of national education, school counselor performs a strategic role. As stated in the system of national education, a counselor is qualified as an educator, in line with the qualification of teacher, lecturer, instructor, and tutor in Article 1 (6) of UU No. 20/2003 on System of National Education. It is expected that counselor's works in guiding and counseling at school bring about significant effects on the achievement of national education objectives.

In reality, counselor's works at school have not been in mutual accord with most people's expectation. The results from Furqon et al.'s research (2004) reflect that more than 58% independently examined counselors produce low quality professional works. The issues and results from the research also suggest a considerable need of an effective supervision of counselor's works for developing counselor's professional competence on the spot.

An effective supervision of counselor's works for maintaining and developing counselor's professional competence is a certainty since counselor works at variable and more complex situation. Counselor is expected to be able to assist students in dealing with global situation of life, full of paradox, intense competition, and rapid change that may easily trap them in a stressful and complicated situation. Thus, students sorely need assistance from competent counselors to cope with particular situations.

* Department of Educational Psychology and Guidance, Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

The identifiable tendency shows that the supervision of counselor's works has not been directed to a continuous attempt to develop counselor's professional quality, whereas this is the principal objective of the supervision. The results from Agus et al.'s research (2005) reveal some ineffectiveness of supervision of school counselor's works thus far, including: (1) the supervision is not continuous; supervisors come only once or twice a year in 45 minutes up to 1 hour session; (2) the activities are simply to observe and ask for physically administrative evidences of guidance and counseling process, without providing a reflective dialogue or favorable feedback for the counselor; (3) counselor and supervisors make use of different references of guidance and counseling process; (4) legal reference and subject teacher supervision handbook becomes the standard reference, since specific guide or manual for supervising guidance and counseling at school has not existed; (5) supervisors are likely to seek for insufficient physical evidence and not to provide an opportunity for holding a discussion with the school counselor; and (6) the supervisors do not ask how the counseling is served.

The inadequacy mentioned above arises from complex causes, which are not only dealing with supervisor's inadequacy, but also dealing with various systemic aspects with conception-fundamental characteristics. On-site supervision of counselor's works is based on the concept of subject teacher supervision, so that it is not only ineffective but also destructive to the development of counselor's professionalism. Obviously, the inadequate supervision leads to adverse consequences for students as they cannot receive appropriate guidance and counseling. Moreover, such supervision may result in people's negative perception on guidance and counseling profession, or even in skeptic and hypocrite attitude toward the supervision. Supervision is not considered as a form of reflection and betterment for professional competence, but it may be regarded as a disturbance.

Theoretically, there are three key approaches to supervise school counselor's works, including psychotherapy, behavioral, and systemic approaches. Each gives emphasis to particular purposes and functions. Psychotherapy approach emphasizes counseling function, behavioral approach emphasizes training and instructional function, and systemic approach emphasizes the function of evaluation and accountability program. As a final point, those approaches should not be in contrast, but they should be used complementarily (Boyd, 1978).

Practically, it is rarely found a supervisor employing single approach only. The approaches have pros and cons, so that they are complementary to complete one another. For gaining an effective supervision process, the three conceptual frameworks of supervision should be combined to form a synthesized methodological framework.

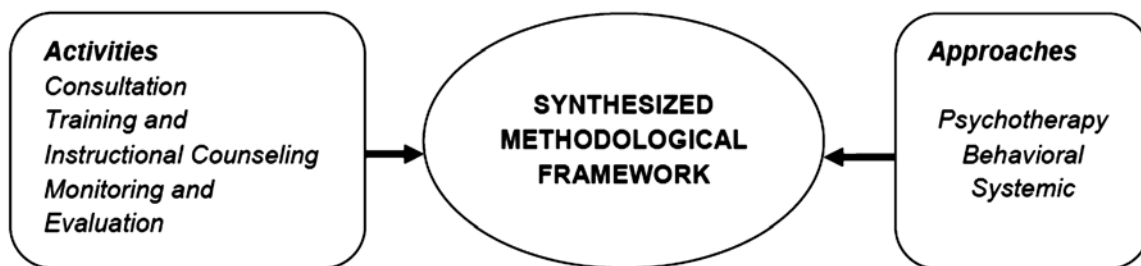


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of Counselor Supervision

Supervision function is implemented through several activities. A contradictory idea might suggest that counselor supervision is an entity or single activity. The supervision defined as a function – consists of five activities, monitoring, consulting, counseling, training and instructing, as well as evaluating.

According to guidance and counseling experts' outlooks, Counselor's Professional Competence (Kompetensi Profesional Konselor, or KPK) in this research is described as counselor's ability in performing duty and expertise in guidance and counseling services at school, including the ability in: (1) assessing student and environmental development, (2) developing guidance and counseling programs, (3) implementing self-encouragement services of guidance and counseling through its fundamental

strategies in the context of (a) guidance basic services (b) responsive services (c) individual planning services (d) systemic support, including management and operation, participative activities and partnership cooperation, and development of guidance media, (4) evaluating programs, and (5) continuing activities for professionalism and self-development.

As an attempt to improve the quality of educational services for students, the supervision of Senior High School counselor's works should be provided in conception and oriented to achieve the primary objective, to succeed in a continuous attempt to develop counselor's professional competence. It is assumed that if the supervision is based on a precise concept and implemented by competent supervisors, it is not only able to improve counselor's competence quality, but also able to enhance counselor's professional development, encourage greater self-awareness, and maintain the integrity of personal and professional identity as a counselor (Borders, 1991).

This research primarily aims to construct a Supervision Model of Guidance and Counseling (MSBK) that is empirically effective in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence. The model is developed into two formats: (1) Guidance and Counseling General Directions consisting of summarized basic concepts of supervision of counselor's works, (2) Directions for Implementing Supervision Model of Guidance and Counseling for Improving the Quality of Counselor's Professional Competence, consisting of operational steps in implementing supervision of counselor's works to achieve expected results.

Operationally, this research aims to look for empirical answers to the following problems:

- What kind of supervision model of guidance and counseling is potentially effective in improving the quality of Senior High School counselor's professional competence ?
- Is the supervision model of guidance and counseling able to develop the whole aspects of Senior High School counselor's professional competence ?
- Is there any effectiveness difference with supervision model of guidance and counseling based on Senior High School counselor's pre-occupational academic background ?
- Is there any effectiveness difference with supervision model of guidance and counseling based on counselor's work experience ?

2. METHOD

Technically, this research is conducted to examine the effectiveness of supervision model of counselor's practical works in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence. The model implementation influences on the improvement of counselor's professional competence are examined on the basis of pre-occupational academic background and work experience as a counselor. Counselors and supervisors engaged are Senior High School counselors and supervisors from several areas in West Java province.

The research is based on Borg and Gall's (1989) research and development procedure consisting of four steps, *i.e.* (1) initial study, (2) model development and validation, (3) experiment of model, and (4) model revision and dissemination.

3. RESULTS

In order to examine the effectiveness of the model at the site, there are four hypotheses proposed in this research, and from the whole processes of development of supervision model of counselor's works in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence, it is found that:

- Generally, MSBK is proved effective in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence.
- MSBK is proved effective in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence, especially in assessing student and environmental development, preparing guidance and counseling

programs, implementing guidance and counseling programs, and evaluating program, but it is not equally effective in developing components of professionalism and self-development activities as a counselor.

- Though MSBK is effective in improving professional competence of counselors from various pre-occupational academic backgrounds, it is more effective to be implemented in improving professional competence of Senior High School counselor, whose pre-occupational academic background is Guidance Counseling (Bimbingan dan Konseling, or BK).
- MSBK is effective in improving professional competence of Senior High School counselors (with BK or non-BK academic background), based on diverse work experience as a counselor. However, the influence of supervision tends to be decreasing along with the increasing years of service.

4. DISCUSSION

The results from the initial study imply a serious need for operational concepts and guide on supervision of counselor's works for developing Senior High School counselor's professional competence. Factual needs are indicated from supervisors' works at the site, such as: being inclined to emphasize administrative verification, being badly managed or even misdirected due to the usage of subject teacher's supervision framework, which is not only irrelevant, but is also obscuring counselor's job description and expectation, as well as impairing professional identity of guidance and counseling or harming the development of counselor's professional competence.

On-site examination indicates that MSBK is proved effective in improving Senior High School counselor's professional competence, especially in assessing student and environmental development, preparing guidance and counseling programs, implementing guidance and counseling programs, and evaluating program, but it is not equally effective in developing components of professionalism and self-development activities as a counselor. MSBK is categorized into two parts. The first one is a set of general directions providing information about the basic concepts of supervision of counselor's works, and consisting of: supervision rationality, definition, assumptions, coverage, functions, and activities. The others is the implementation directions providing operational information about supervision phases, work principles, supervisor's characteristics, and supports from professional organization and MGBK forum. Experts and practitioners of guidance and counseling have considered that MSBK has passed feasibility study (of content/concept).

Though MSBK is effective in improving professional competence of counselors from various pre-occupational academic backgrounds, it is more effective to be implemented in improving professional competence of Senior High School counselor, whose pre-occupational academic background is Guidance and Counseling (Bimbingan dan Konseling, or BK). This study result strongly support the assumption that if the supervision is based on a precise concept and implemented by competent supervisors, it is not only able to improve counselor's competence quality, but also able to enhance counselor's professional development, encourage greater self-awareness, and maintain the integrity of personal and professional identity as a counselor (Borders, 1991).

It is considered that the developed model can improve counselor's professional competence, because it provides not only relevant and comprehensive framework of supervision, but also adjustable technical repertoires for diverse characteristics of supervised counselors. Through MSBK, supervisors are challenged to adjust interference techniques developed from three approaches in responding encountered situation and condition in the supervision process. A "full-of-methodology" supervisor is considered more competent to handle particular situation by performing various activities and operating appropriate eclectic and technical equipment. The supervisor will be confident to response particular situation and be able to organize and implement supervision program by synthesizing various methodologies.

MSBK is effective in improving professional competence of Senior High School counselors (with BK or non-BK academic background), based on diverse work experience as a counselor. However, the influence of supervision tends to be decreasing along with the increasing years of service. In the group of counselors with longer years of service, it is considered that there is an indication of resistance to the continuous attempt of developing professionalism. However, this condition still needs to be examined to determine whether it is the case, or there is another reason for it. If it is in such a way, the indication might suggest a form of regret for broadening work experience without improving competence. Whereas, along with the development of the society, counselors are expected not only to use their pre-occupational education, but also to adjust themselves continuously to the development of knowledge, technology, arts, and the dynamics of human needs. In this context, counselors should manage themselves on Zi Orga's (1997) concept of life long professional learning, which is a process of experience-based learning on directionally and continuously performing professional responsibility.

In organizational system of profession, supervision is related to the attempt to uphold quality culture. The quality culture essentially is a behavioral system developed from particular principle, concept, and philosophy of particular knowledge (epistemology). The system should be implemented by the professional in his or her professional works that result in particular benefits for the served parties or other people concerned.

The success of counselors in maintaining and improving their professional competence build up people's trust for giving them strategic positions as it is believed that the counselors will be able to deal with future challenge in education, and in guidance and counseling in particular. In contrary, one's difficulty or failure in maintaining and improving it may result in professional obsolescence, which is a gap between the stocks of one's knowledge, competence, and ability and proficiency expectation to perform professional responsibilities effectively (Spencer, L.N. and Spencer, S.M., 1993).

In guidance and counseling profession, Hawkins and Shohet (1997) suggests that the professional obsolescence occurs due to the lack of effective supervision, so that in a long term, the profession will be left over, become awkward and low powered. In an extreme condition, obsolescence and defensiveness will influence a 'burnout' syndrome. A competent supervisor will be able to assist to slow down and stop this process by ending the cycle of spreading feeling about lower work standards. Supervision is also able to break the cycle of guilty and insufficient feelings that might results in worse declining of work standards.

The concept of life long professional learning implies that professional competence resulted from pre-occupational education is not the final stage and does not come with a guarantee that a counselor will be able to perform his or her professional responsibilities well for good. Therefore, pre-occupational academic competence should be considered as a capital investment for professional learning at the site. In this condition, the supervision of counselor's works is necessary as it provides an opportunity to learn professionally well, and the supervisors may encourage counselors to conduct reflective activities by holding a dialogue, and sharing opinion or feedback to improve their quality of professional works.

The demand for maintenance and development of counselor's professional competence is a certainty since counselor is expected to be able to assist students in dealing with life that is full of paradox, intense competition, and rapid change that may easily trap them in a stressful and complicated situation. To cope with the complex situation in their life, students sorely need assistance from competent counselors. Besides, teachers also need consultative assistance from school counselor. In this context, comprehensive guidance and counseling program implemented at modern schools becomes a challenge to a counselor to demonstrate his or her professional competence effectively.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the research, there are several conclusions made:

It is strongly suggested that supervisors of counselor's on-site works use MSBK as on-site work guidance, intended to stimulate effective supervision of counselor's works on the basis of prevailing Standard of Counselor's Competence.

Fostering collaboration and employing professional organization (Regional ABKIN), the division of Ikatan Pendidikan dan Supervisi Konselor (IPSIKON), as well as Musyawarah Guru Bimbingan dan Konseling (MGBK) in maintaining and developing supervision and peer supervision guide to reduce imbalance between the quantity of supervisors and that of counselor to supervise.

It is expected that the education institute of counselors or candidates use MSBK in implementing Counselor Professional Education. It is recommended that Regional Government include following points as the requirements of candidates of counselor supervisor recruitment: (a) Bachelor degree of guidance and counseling department, (b) Experienced as an SMP/SMA (Junior or Senior High School, or its equivalent) counselor, (c) Educated and trained on Counselor Standards of Competence (Standar Kompetensi Konselor), complete framework of guidance and counseling in formal education, and supervision methodology of counselor's professional works. It is suggested that further research examine the same topic, but give more emphasizes to observe the effectiveness of MSBK and its relation to counselor's professional competence and works by implementing different instruments.

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