

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AS A GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING APPROACH IN THE SELECTION OF STUDY PROGRAMS AT MERCU BUANA UNIVERSITY FOR STUDENTS OF CLASS XII SMKN 60 JAKARTA

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Abstract. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of interpersonal communication as an approach in guidance and counseling for selecting study programs at Mercu Buana University for 12th-grade students at SMKN 60 Jakarta. Effective interpersonal communication between guidance counselors (BK) and students plays a crucial role in helping students understand their potential and interests, guiding them in making appropriate decisions regarding their choice of study programs in higher education. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach, involving in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The results indicate that interpersonal communication conducted by BK teachers can enhance students' self-awareness, reduce anxiety in the decision-making process, and provide positive encouragement to achieve their academic goals. Furthermore, the supportive interactions and empathy shown by BK teachers significantly contribute to increasing students' confidence in choosing study programs that align with their interests and talents. This study concludes that the interpersonal communication approach in guidance and counseling is highly effective in assisting 12th-grade students at SMKN 60 Jakarta in selecting study programs at Mercu Buana University.

Keywords: Interpersonal Communication, Guidance and Counseling, Study Program Selection, Students, Mercu Buana University, SMKN 60 Jakarta

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian government has established a compulsory education policy for 12 years, which covers the level of education of Senior High School (SMA) or Vocational High School (SMK). The stigma that develops in society is that high school students are directed to continue their education to college, while vocational school students are prepared to work immediately. However, the reality shows that each student has different goals and abilities. Many vocational school students want to continue their education to college, some choose to work while studying, and some choose to work immediately after graduation.

Often, vocational school students face obstacles in deciding what career they will build after graduation. Many of them feel wrong in making decisions, especially when going to college and choosing a major that does not match their interests and talents. This can lead to feelings of failure and difficulties in attending lectures, which ultimately interferes with the learning process and the psychological state of students.

Data shows that 87% of students in Indonesia choose the wrong major, which has an impact on the quality of undergraduate graduates. Choosing the wrong major can reduce students' enthusiasm for learning and make them feel unsuitable for their chosen field, so that their readiness for a career is not optimal. Research also reveals that many students are not well aware of their interests and potential, leading to stress and psychological disorders.

Therefore, educational guidance and counseling are indispensable for high school and vocational school students. With the right guidance, students can know their interests and talents, so they can take appropriate majors and reduce academic stress. Effective interpersonal communication is essential in guidance and counseling activities. Guidance and counseling (BK) teachers need to have good interpersonal communication skills to create a safe and comfortable environment for students to talk about their problems.

In the world of education, interpersonal communication is not only used in the teaching process but also in guidance and counseling. The effectiveness of interpersonal communication allows BK teachers to better understand students' needs, feelings, and problems through empathy, active attention, and openness. This helps in providing targeted guidance, helping students develop problem-solving

skills, and improving their emotional well-being

The academic and career guidance provided at school is very helpful for students in determining their majors or decisions after graduation. The function of guidance and counseling includes understanding, prevention, development, healing, distribution, adaptation, adjustment, repair, facilitation, and maintenance. Counselors or psychologists are expected to provide interesting and appropriate approaches so that students can plan their future well.

Psychological approaches, such as humanistic theories in person-centered approaches, emphasize that each individual has a tendency to develop positively and constructively. Counselors who use this approach believe that human beings have values and dignity that deserve to be valued, the capacity to self-govern, and the ability to choose their own values and be constructively responsible.

Effective interpersonal communication in guidance and counseling is essential to ensure that the message conveyed can be well received by students. Thus, students can understand themselves and make informed decisions regarding their future careers and education.

The focus of this research is to find out how effective interpersonal communication as a guidance and counseling approach in the selection of study programs at Mercu Buana University for grade XII students of SMKN 60 Jakarta.

The final goal of this study is to find out how effective an interpersonal communication is as a guidance and counseling approach in the selection of study programs at Mercu Buana University for grade XII students of SMKN 60 Jakarta.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication. Etymologically, communication, or the word conform, comes from the Latin word which means to communicate, which means the same about something. So a continuous communication process occurs if there is a similarity in the things communicated or in certain interests. Communication can occur when there is a message to be conveyed and the recipient of the message also receives feedback that is immediately received by the sender of the message. In addition, communication is the process by which a person conveys a message to another person to inform, change attitudes, opinions or behaviors, either directly verbally or indirectly through the media. In this communication, a reciprocal relationship between the sender and receiver of the message is needed, namely between the medium and the medium. Tomohardjo (2017) explains that "When doing the process of speech, one requires a communication skill that makes communication competence becomes very important."

Interpersonal Communication. Interpersonal communication is face-to-face communication between people where each participant can directly capture the reactions of others both verbally and non-verbally (Mulyana, 2005). This communication indicates that the parties communicating close to each other and that they send and receive messages both verbal and non-verbal simultaneously and spontaneously.

Therefore, Devito (2013) explains interpersonal communication as sending messages by a person or group of people (media) and direct effects and feedback from messages received by other people (media). Therefore, communication between people is active, not passive. This communication is a reciprocal communication between the sender and receiver of the message. Interpersonal communication is not just a series of stimulus-responses, stimulus-responses, but mutual acceptance and response communication processed by each party.

Therefore, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication is communication that occurs directly or verbally or non-verbally in such a way that communicators and communicators can directly receive and provide feedback, which is carried out by at least two or more people face-to-face, face-to-face or with the help of mass media.

The effectiveness of Interpersonal Communication begins with five general qualities that are considered, namely openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality (Devito, 2013).

Guidance and Counseling. Guidance and counseling is a coaching provided by a person where it is to help a person to be able to achieve goals and decisions. There are various definitions of guidance and counseling that can be found in various literature. In general, formulations related to guidance and counseling have a common thread that ends in one sense with another. Etymologically, guidance and counseling consist of two words, namely "guidance" (translation of the word "guidance") and

"counseling" (adopted from the word "counseling"), in practice, guidance and counseling are an inseparable unit of activities. (Ngalimun & Ihsan, 2011)

While Counseling is actually a technique or service in a guidance. However, the techniques and services provided are varied and very special because they are flexible and comprehensive. Where in counseling there is a technique that is a key in providing a fundamental change in a person's attitude, perception, attitude, and feelings.

Principles of Guidance and Counseling In the implementation of guidance and counseling services, the rules are known as the principles of guidance and counseling, namely the provisions that must be stipulated in the implementation of services according to Prayitno and Erman (in Syafaruddin *et al.*, 2019) The principles in question are the principles of confidentiality, voluntariness, openness, contemporary, independence, activity, dynamism, integration, normativeness, expertise, expertise, hand experts, and tut wuri hadayani.

Humanistic Counseling Guidance. The person-centered approach (in Nasution & Abdillah, 2019) reveals that a person has a belief that the individual is inherently good. This is also described that manusia has a tendency to develop positively and constructively, realistically, and can be trusted. Furthermore, every human being has an inner directed drive to develop strategies that make him fully functional.

According to the person-centered approach, humans are seen as rational people, social beings, reality and development. Humans who have negative feelings and anti-social emotions are the result of frustration over the lack of basic needs of love and belonging. Counselors with a person-centered approach believe that human beings are: a. Having worth and dignity in herself so that she deserves to be given respect. b. Have the capacity and the things to regulate themselves and get a chance and make wise judgments. c. Be able to choose their own values, and learn to be responsible constructively d. Have the capacity to overcome their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

The person-centered approach is built on two basic hypotheses: a) Everyone has the capacity to understand the circumstances that cause unhappiness and rearrange their lives for the better, and b) A person's ability to cope with these circumstances can occur and be improved if the counselor creates warmth, acceptance, and can understand the relationship of the counseling process that is being built.

Choosing a Major in Higher Education. Decision is the process of tracing problems that start from the background of the problem, identifying the problem to the formation of conclusions or recommendations (Fahmi, 2013). The recommendation is then used and used as a basic guideline in decision-making. Therefore, the impact will be so great if the recommendations produced are erroneous or there are hidden errors due to the factor of carelessness in conducting problem assessments.

Meanwhile, according to Ralp C. Davis (in Rifai, 2020) said that the decision is a clear solution and the answer to the problem at hand. Furthermore, Davis emphasized that the decision must synergize with the planning function so that there are no deviations in its implementation. Furthermore, Mary Folle further explained the decision with the law of the situation which says that authority is only exercised.

It can be concluded that decision-making to choose a major in Higher Education is a thinking process where individuals evaluate one or more alternatives and make a choice in determining a certain major or field of expertise in Higher Education as a short-term or long-term preparation plan for individuals to create a good result.

METHOD

Research Paradigm. In this study, a constructivist paradigm is used. The constructivist or interpretive paradigm seeks to understand the meaning and interpretation of human beings in a natural context through their daily activities in real life. Epistemologically, this paradigm follows transactional and subjectivist understandings. Researchers and research subjects are considered to interact with each other, so that research results are produced through the research process itself (Nasrullah, 2020).

Type of Research. This type of research is qualitative and descriptive. where according to Moleong (2013) qualitative descriptive research is an approach in which the data collection process will be carried out with words, images, notes, photos, videos and documentation related to personal activities or a personal record owned by a person. Descriptive research is research that intends to create a detailed and

clear picture of research conducted on a population or region.

Research Methods. The researcher uses the case study method, the goal is to intensively study the background of the current situation and environmental interaction as a social unit.

Case Study Research, in Sulvinajayanti (2019) A case study is a type of approach in research that deepens a case intensively, in-depth, detailed, and comprehensive. Case studies can be done on an individual.

This study uses a non-probability sampling technique, where according to Sugiyono (2018) this method is a sampling technique that does not provide the possibility of not selecting samples or populations, so that using this technique can make it easier for researchers to determine it. samples used in the research process.

Research Subject. In this study, the researcher will select a sample that is indeed in accordance with the research criteria carried out the criteria used as the subject of the researcher's research are:

- 1) Male – Male / Female
- 2) Are Grade XII Students
- 3) Choosing Mercu Buana University for Further Study

Data Collection Techniques. Data collection techniques are the most important thing in research. Because the main purpose of research is to obtain data (Sugiyono, 2018). Research cannot be obtained if the researcher does not understand and do not know how to obtain the data. Therefore, the researcher uses the interview technique as a data collection method in this study.

Data Analysis Techniques. The Data Analysis Technique is a technique used to conduct a Validity and Reliability analysis used in qualitative research, Qualitative data analysis includes three activities, namely the data reduction stage, data presentation and drawing conclusions or verification (in Rijali, 2018)

Data Validity Techniques. In testing the validity of the data, the researcher uses the triangulation technique, which is the examination of the validity of the data that utilizes something other than the data for the purpose of checking or comparing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Informant Overview. The informants in this study were 4 students from SMKN 60 West Jakarta and 2 BK teachers from SMKN 60 West Jakarta. In this study, a total of 6 resource persons were used but with 2 different categories, namely 4 students who were consulting with BK teachers about the choice of majors they would take when registering at the Mercu Buana University campus, then for the next time were 2 BK teachers who were in charge of fostering and providing counseling guidance to students who were confused about the majors to be taken when studying later.

Interpersonal Communication of Vocational School Students and BK Teachers. Interpersonal communication that occurs between vocational school students and BK teachers occurs as long as students need consultation with BK teachers regarding anything related to educational counseling guidance, one of which is in choosing a major for lectures. Communication is carried out directly between vocational school students and BK teachers. Usually vocational school students do counseling during BK subjects, but some are outside of class hours or usually during breaks or after school.

“... Usually students if the counseling is right during BK class hours. But there are also those who are right during recess and after school. Usually they need more time for the consul, so they have made an appointment via WA for the consul” (Interview with Mr. Yasir, May 15, 2024).

When asked about the success of the students who finally found and decided to take the major they wanted, Mr. Yasir answered that from the 4 students who were respondents in this study, they finally found the major they would take when studying at the landmark. Based on the results of counseling conducted between vocational school students and BK teachers, this is interesting to discuss and analyze further, by linking DeVito's interpersonal communication theory which discusses that there are five points of interpersonal communication effectiveness, namely openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality. (Devito, 2013)

Openness. This study assesses the effectiveness of interpersonal communication between vocational school students and BK teachers in the selection of lecture majors. Counseling is usually done during BK subjects, but it can also be outside of class hours such as breaks or after school with a previous appointment via WhatsApp.

Mr. Yasir said that four students who were research respondents succeeded in determining their major at Mercu Buana University. Openness between BK students and teachers is very important in this process. BK teachers, such as Mrs. Rusdati, encourage students to be open about their obstacles and desires so that the counseling process is more effective.

Students like Rahayu and Aziz expressed their confusion in choosing a major that suits their interests and abilities, even though they have determined the destination campus.

"... I actually wanted to become a psychologist, but it was not connected to the major I took at SMK now. So I am confused about whether to continue what I have learned or repeat it by just taking a psychologist major" (Interview with Rahayu, May 15, 2024).

Likewise with another vocational school student named Aziz "... In that landmark there are so many faculties, not to mention the majors. So I'm confused about what major to take, because don't end up in the wrong major, it will be difficult to do it in the future because it turns out that it is not in accordance with the abilities I have" (Interview with Aziz, May 15, 2024).

Openness and support from BK teachers help students in determining the right major. For example, Ayu felt that BK teachers gave detailed directions regarding the selection of majors and job prospects.

"BK teachers, Alhamdulillah, are open, for example, giving directions on how to choose a major that suits my passion to the job prospects are also explained in detail" (Interview with Ayu, May 15, 2024).

Empathy. BK teachers have an important role in understanding the circumstances and conditions of vocational school students through interpersonal communication based on empathy. Mrs. Rusdati emphasized the importance of understanding students' weaknesses, such as difficulties in math lessons, in order to be able to provide advice on majors that are more in line with students' abilities.

"... There are some children who are not able to learn numbers or calculations. Yes, I must be able to understand that this child has a weakness in calculations, which means that he must be given advice on a major whose calculations are small" (Interview with Mrs. Rustadi, May 16, 2024).

One student, Aziz, benefited from the empathy of the BK teacher who directed him to a major that better suited his abilities, namely communication science, after realizing his weakness in calculations.

"I said from the beginning that I was not able to be calculated, I was going to take a major that was calculated. I just wanted to study Engineering, but it turned out that Mrs. Rusdati said that Engineering actually has a lot of calculations, and then my mother gave me advice to just take communication science because the calculations are few... So I felt understood and was directed to a major that was more in line with my abilities" (Interview with Aziz, May 15, 2024).

In addition to understanding the academic difficulties of students, BK teachers must also be sensitive to the condition of students' families. Mr. Yasir stated that the influence of family in choosing a major is very large, and BK teachers need to empathize and understand this condition to help students. Ayu, a student, revealed that her desire to choose a management major was contrary to her mother's desire to advise accounting, and felt supported by the empathy of BK teachers in facing these obstacles.

The willingness of BK teachers to listen and understand the complaints of vocational school students reflects their understanding of the various obstacles faced by students. The students appreciated the openness of BK teachers in receiving information about their conditions, which was considered a form of understanding and real support from BK teachers towards the needs and difficulties of students.

Supportiveness. BK teachers at vocational schools provide significant support during counseling by motivating and appreciating students. Mr. Yasir stated that motivation is given to help students overcome doubts in choosing a major

"I always give motivation when students feel that there is an obstacle in their problem. Like the example of a student who is worried about his major because there are obstacles in one thing or another, I give him motivation so that he can be more motivated so that he does not back down during the selection of this major, hopefully he will not hesitate and find a way out" (Interview with Mr. Yasir, May 15, 2024).

This support is felt by students like Aziz, who are still enthusiastic about choosing a major thanks to the encouragement from BK teachers.

"Alhamdulillah, every story about obstacles is always given encouragement so that I don't give up, because sometimes I think I don't have to continue studying, but because I am motivated, I finally get excited again" (Aziz Interview, May 15, 2024).

In addition, BK teachers help students deal with internal obstacles, such as a lack of support from families. Mr. Yasir explained that BK teachers play a role in helping students communicate with parents about their choice of major. Muhsin, one of the students, felt helped by this support in conveying his wishes to his parents.

"Regarding the problem of majors that I was told to do with my parents, BK teachers gave me support and understanding about how to tell my parents if my will is really like this, so parents must also know what my true will is" (Interview with Muhsin, May 15, 2024).

Support in the form of motivation and enthusiasm from BK teachers creates an important understanding in helping students determine the right major for lectures later.

Positiveness. BK teachers show a positive attitude by providing encouragement and motivation to students during counseling. They not only listen to students' complaints but also give constructive

suggestions. Students feel this support and feel motivated, as conveyed by Ayu.

"BK teachers always motivate and continue to encourage me during counseling activities, so I join the enthusiasm and feel supported" (Interview with Ayu, May 15, 2024).

BK teachers are also optimistic about the future of students, helping them see potential and opportunities. They focus on the positives in the students' choices and help overcome concerns, as explained by Mr. Yasir.

"As much as possible, we also help students so that they can see that there is actually potential from within them, the name is teenagers who are overthinking, so we try our best to overcome their overthinking. We also help them to make decisions carefully so that they don't get carried away with their decisions. The name is teenagers who must still like to be labil" (Interview with Mr. Yasir, May 15, 2024).

Students, like Aziz, feel driven to make informed decisions *"During the counseling, the BK teacher also made me aware of the potential that existed in me. I was also reminded not to be rash in making decisions" (Interview with Aziz, May 15, 2024).*

This positive attitude creates a supportive environment for students to express their aspirations and concerns honestly, increasing their confidence and motivation in facing educational decisions.

Equality. BK teachers show an attitude of equality by respecting each student as an individual who has important opinions, feelings, and aspirations. They do not belittle students or doubt their ability to make decisions about their academic future, as revealed by Mr. Yasir.

"We as BK teachers must also respect the opinions and most importantly the feelings felt by students. With this, we can definitely gain the trust of students. The point is not to underestimate students" (Interview with Mr. Yasir, May 15, 2024).

Students also feel this equality, feel valued and given the opportunity to express their opinions personally, as conveyed by Muhsin Guru BK provides an equal space for all students to speak and take an active part in decision-making. They listen with empathy and make sure every voice is heard. This attitude of equality creates an inclusive environment where students feel respected and motivated to take important steps regarding their education.

Discussion. This study explores interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students in the context of counseling to determine the major of study at Mercuru Buana University, paying attention to DeVito's theory of interpersonal communication. The research highlights five key aspects of effective communication: openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and equality.

The openness of BK teachers allows students to feel comfortable sharing their feelings and questions regarding the choice of major. BK teachers such as Mrs. Rusdati and Mr. Yasir showed empathy by understanding the academic challenges and pressures faced by students, such as the difficulty of learning mathematics expressed by Aziz.

In the counseling process, BK teachers provide support that is not only practical but also psychological to students. They provide positive motivation and encouragement, as experienced by Ayu and Aziz, to help students overcome their worries and make the right decisions.

BK teachers also show a positive attitude that helps create a supportive environment. They not only listen but also provide constructive advice to students, thus increasing students' confidence in

making academic decisions.

The principle of equality is implemented by respecting each student as a partner in the counseling process. BK teachers provide space for students to express their opinions and aspirations openly, without judgment or dominance in the conversation.

The results of the study show that effective interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students contributes greatly to students' academic decisions in choosing majors in college. BK teachers not only act as informants, but also as facilitators who help students make more informed decisions based on their personal interests and aspirations.

This study underscores the importance of the principles of effective interpersonal communication in counseling between BK teachers and vocational school students. Openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and equality not only strengthen the relationship between teachers and students, but also increase students' confidence in making crucial educational decisions for their future.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study that observed interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students in the context of choosing a university major, it can be concluded that this communication has a significant role in helping students overcome obstacles and make the right decisions. BK teachers act as stimuli that provide information, advice, and support to students, while students respond to the stimulus by expressing their needs, concerns, and aspirations.

Interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students is effective because it is based on the principles of openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and equality. BK teachers have managed to create a supportive environment, where students feel heard, understood, and valued. This strengthens the relationship of trust between teachers and students, so students feel more confident and motivated in making decisions about their academic future.

In the context of stimulus-response theory, BK teachers as a stimulus play a role in influencing students' responses to major decision-making. A positive response from students to the stimulus provided indicates the effectiveness of interpersonal communication. The support, comprehensive information, empathy, and equality shown by BK teachers help students overcome obstacles and make informed decisions.

Thus, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students plays an important role in helping students make decisions about choosing a college major. This conclusion is based on the results of research that show that effective communication between BK teachers and students can help students feel more confident and motivated in making the right decisions according to their interests, abilities, and aspirations.

Suggestion

Academic Advising. This research is expected to provide academic information and future researchers so that this research can be used as one of the references needed. For further researchers, they can conduct further research to explore what factors support and inhibit the effectiveness of interpersonal communication between BK teachers and vocational school students in the context of choosing a major. Identifying these factors can provide deeper insights into how communication can be improved to support students more effectively.

Practical Advice. Researchers can give advice to BK teachers, especially at SMKN 60 Jakarta. BK teachers can mediate discussions between students and parents. By facilitating open conversations, teachers can help clarify parents' expectations and convey students' aspirations, so that they can reach an agreement that satisfies both parties. An evaluation was carried out to continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the counseling process between BK teachers and students. This can be done through surveys or interviews with students and parents to identify areas that need improvement and improve the quality of counseling guidance services.

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