IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES FACED BY STUDENTS: A STRATEGIC STEP IN IMPLEMENTING COUNSELING AT PESANTREN

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Abstract

The development of counseling systems in Pesantren or Islamic boarding schools requires a strong foundation of data. This research aims to identify the issues faced by students as a crucial foundation. A survey method was used with the Problem Checklist (DCM) instrument distributed to 49 students at one of the Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta. The results of the study indicate that students face various issues, including health, economic, family, and school environment-related problems. Data analysis emphasizes the importance of a deep understanding of students' issues to design effective interventions. The implementation of counseling services in boarding schools is highly significant in supporting the holistic development of students. Subsequent steps include data scoring, result analysis, and presentation to design counseling programs that meet students' needs. It is hoped that these efforts will enhance students' well-being and academic achievement, strengthening the role of boarding schools as institutions caring for the personal and social development of their students.

Keywords: *Pesantren Counseling, Problem Checklist*

Abstrak

Pengembangan sistem konseling di Pesantren atau Pondok Pesantren memerlukan landasan data yang kuat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi persoalan-persoalan yang dihadapi mahasiswa sebagai landasan krusialnya. Metode yang digunakan adalah survei dengan instrumen Problem Checklist (DCM) yang dibagikan kepada 49 santri di salah satu pondok pesantren di Yogyakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa menghadapi berbagai permasalahan, antara lain masalah kesehatan, ekonomi, keluarga, dan lingkungan sekolah. Analisis data menekankan pentingnya pemahaman mendalam terhadap permasalahan siswa untuk merancang intervensi yang efektif. Penyelenggaraan

layanan konseling di pesantren sangat penting dalam mendukung perkembangan santri secara holistik. Langkah selanjutnya meliputi penilaian data, analisis hasil, dan presentasi untuk merancang program konseling yang memenuhi kebutuhan siswa. Upaya tersebut diharapkan dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan dan prestasi akademik santri, memperkuat peran pesantren sebagai lembaga yang peduli terhadap perkembangan pribadi dan sosial santrinya.

Kata Kunci: Konseling Pesantren, Daftar Cek Masalah (DCM)

Introduction

Human beings as creatures of God are endowed with many potentials. Some can immediately realize their talents and others need help to recognize their potential. Educational institutions such as boarding schools, known as Pesantren, and educational institutions in general should provide opportunities for every child to discover and develop their potential. They need to develop a counseling system based on reliable data.

In the public school system in Indonesia, it often requires good grades and other academic requirements as a condition for the acceptance of students in learning. However, pesantren in Indonesia have been a place for all. Pesantren has always been present as a learning opportunity for everyone. There are no difficult requirements needed to study in pesantren. It is an opportunity to learn for almost everyone who wants to learn. Students who drop out of regular schools and no longer have the opportunity to study can become santri. The boarding school system has kept up with the times. Now there is also the term modern boarding school, as stated that it can usually be divided into two classes: traditional and modern (Rizqi et al., 2021).

Both traditional and modern pesantren are considered accommodating places to learn. In addition, pesantren has a continuous educational content. Learning in pesantren is not only learning from various perspectives. Santri learns religious knowledge, science, and knowledge related to life skills, and develop a spiritual perspective. This makes the popularity of pesantren as an educational institution even better.

With the increasing public trust, pesantren has recently received a lot of attention. In addition to many positive things, there was negative sentiment due to the behaviour of some individuals, the perpetrators from various backgrounds caused various cases that were widely highlighted. For example, behaviours that have become a concern include bullying (Isnainiah, 2023; Nashiruddin, 2019) and sexual violence (Dedi, 2022; Deslatama, 2022).

This incident is a national concern and requires a response by realizing child-friendly education. Child-friendly education is based on the right of children to learn optimally. Various groups either or Pesantren welcomed this. The forms of participation vary, ranging from socialization such as in Semarang (Habibila, 2019), strengthening commitment such as in Gunung Kidul (Putra, 2021) and many more.

These efforts are good steps and require more systematic efforts in creating conditions for santri who have good psychological health. As Basnang said, child-friendly pesantren must be realized gradually and sustainably (Hafil, 2022). From the above, short-term measurable efforts and long-term planned prevention efforts are needed through a system. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a counselling system that is in accordance with the culture of learning in pesantren that aims to develop students' psychological well-being.

The development of a guidance and counseling (BK) system in Pesantren critically requires survey data on the problems faced by the students. The proposed hypothesis is that the emotional, social, career, and academic issues of students are not being addressed optimally due to a lack of in-depth understanding of their needs. The research problems include identifying the most common issues faced by students and assessing the effectiveness of the existing BK programs. Comprehensive survey data will enable Pesantren to formulate more precise and targeted intervention strategies. Therefore, collecting and analyzing survey data is a fundamental step to enhance the quality of BK services and overall student well-being.

Methods

This research method employs a survey using the Problem Checklist (DCM) instrument distributed to one of the Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta. The survey involves 49 students selected through convenience sampling. The first step is to select the instrument, and in this study, the DCM (Problem Checklist) commonly used and widely validated in Indonesia is chosen. The DCM covers various aspects of issues that students may face within twelve themes, including Health, Economic Condition, Family, Religion and Morality, Personal, Social Relationships, Recreation, Adjustment to School Environment, Curriculum Adjustment, Future Career, Study Habits, and Romance. Subsequently, scoring is conducted using a specialized Excel program for the DCM and analyzing the results. Data collection involves directly asking students to fill out the DCM. The collected data are then utilized to identify and describe the most prevalent issues among students. The analysis results are presented in tables and graphs for easier interpretation. Finally, the findings from this analysis are employed to design more targeted guidance and counseling interventions at the boarding school.

Results and Discussion

The data is the result of a survey on various problem topics faced by 52 respondents. There were 12 problem topics observed in the survey, ranging from health, economic conditions, to romance issues. From the survey results, it can be seen that most respondents experienced problems in several specific topics.
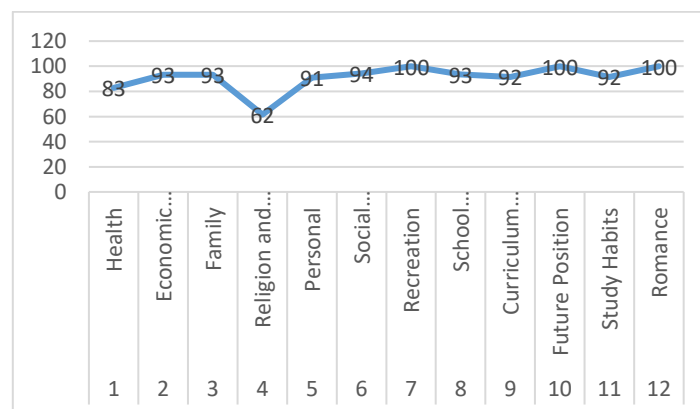

Table 1. Percentage of Student Issues

The highest percentage of respondents experiencing problems occurred in the topics of Recreation, Future Position, and Romance, where 100% of the respondents had problems in these topics. This indicates that all respondents felt that they had similar problem themes related to recreation, future of work, and romance.

In addition, the problem topics were spread almost evenly. For example, the theme of social relationships reached a percentage of 94%, signaling significant challenges in interacting and building social relationships among participants. Economic circumstances were also a serious concern with a percentage of 93%, illustrating the perceived impact of financial limitations or difficulties. Family topics also had the same percentage as economic circumstances, indicating that family dynamics also significantly affected participants' well-being. School environment adjustment and curriculum adjustment had percentages of 93% and 92% respectively, indicating the challenges in adjusting to the educational environment and curriculum. Finally, study habits with a percentage of 92% shows that there is room to improve participants' study patterns.

On the other hand, the lowest percentage of respondents experiencing problems occurred on the topic of Religion and Morals, at only 62%. This shows that a small percentage of respondents experienced problems in the religious and moral aspects. In addition, the topic of health problems also has a relatively small percentage with 83%.

Taking into account the identification of problems on these themes, it is possible to analyze the level of problem tendency on each topic observed in the survey. This helps in understanding how common these problems are among the santris and provides valuable insights for designing appropriate counseling interventions.

Counselling programs have long been known in Indonesia. Since the 1960s, counselling programs have continued to develop until now. Along the way, the counselling program underwent several name changes, including Counselling, Career Counselling, and finally Guidance and Counselling (BK). Professions responsible for implementing guidance and counselling programs in schools are called counselling teachers or educational counsellors. To lead counselling services, a counsellor requires

several special qualifications, including a bachelor's degree in counselling and counselling. The counselling teacher plays a role in providing services to students programmatically.

Up to now, BK has only focused on handling aspects of problematic behaviour. BK is synonymous with problems such as tardiness, absenteeism, quarrels, and dealing with students who do not dress according to regulations. BK teachers are often equated with school police because they enforce disciplinary measures and impose sanctions on students who violate them.

BK at this time experienced a paradigm shift that began to focus on the practice of preventing problems and developing potential. Hikmawati further emphasized that BK is a program that optimizes students' developmental tasks (Hikmawati, 2016). The counselling program ensures that a person can make decisions independently (Umami, 2014). The statement shows that the guidance and counselling program is not necessarily only a discipline, but includes many aspects.

The counselling program has many strategies that can help students achieve their life goals. Counselling programs have the function of understanding, advancing, adapting, distributing, adapting, preventing, improving, advocating, developing and maintaining (Ditjen Guru dan Tenaga pendidikan, 2016). Running this program requires good program management. Counsellors or people who run counselling programs are expected to function in terms of system analysis, testing and evaluation, program planning, client advocacy, networking, and so on (Pravesti & Mufidah, 2022).

The explanation above confirms that BK or counselling programs do not only aim to alleviate problems but also in the aspects of development and prevention. It is also known that counselling requires the skills of a program manager to work well. Therefore, the practical implementation of counselling programs in pesantren requires a number of activities.

As explained, counselling is an effort to help others. This effort is based on different methodologies. The strategies applied are based on different theoretical perspectives, such as psychodynamic, behaviourist, humanistic, and cognitive theories (Walters & Corey, 1980). Along with the development of various problems faced by society, the counselling strategies used have also developed. So understanding the

needs of students or the problems faced by students will be a very important aspect in helping to develop the counselling system in pesantren.

Based on the findings in this study, it confirms that there are problems experienced by students in many areas. this can be a strong basis for starting to develop an appropriate counseling system. For example, the survey results of this study captured indications of problems experienced by students in almost all themes and especially in three very strong aspects. On the other hand, religious and moral issues have the lowest percentage at 62%, indicating that this aspect is relatively better. One of the function of the pesantren is to develop the good character of the students (Farhah et al., 2022; Sudiartono, 2021; Tursilah, 2021).

Counselling System is suitable to be applied in a pesantren environment because it is developed with various values in Islam. Initially, counselling techniques were based on science alone, but along with the increasing complexity of problems that could not be solved, religious science became one of the answers. The development of counselling in Islam is an effort to help humans to return to receiving Allah's blessings. Anwar Stoyo wrote in his book that the essence of Islamic guidance and advice is to help individuals develop their own fitrah or return to fitrah by strengthening faith, reason and the will give by Allah SWT (Sutoyo, 2014).

Although the term counselling comes from the Western world, it does not mean that similar discussions do not exist in the Islamic perspective. In his writing, Bastomi explained that in classical Islam, a counsellor was known as hisbah or ichtisab, a counsellor was known as muftasib, and a client was known as muftasab alai (Bastomi, 2017). All of these are proof that the practice of counselling is indeed close to the Islamic community, even though it is not built on the science of counselling. In Indonesia, Islamic counselling generally begins through the Islamic Counselling Guidance Program.

Implementation of counseling in Islamic boarding schools can be carried out using strategic steps which include identifying problems, identifying needs, forming a team of competent counselors, and preparing a structured counseling program. To ensure its effectiveness, Islamic boarding schools need to provide a comfortable space and flexible time, and integrate religious values in the counseling process. In addition,

it is important to conduct socialization and education about mental health to students and teachers to eliminate stigma and increase awareness. Periodic monitoring and evaluation are also needed to assess the success of the counseling program and make adjustments if necessary, as well as involving families in this process to support students comprehensively.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that respondents expressed a wide range of significant problems that they faced. Recreation, future employment and romance issues were the most dominant, with 100% of respondents reporting problems in these three topics. Social relationships were also a big challenge with a percentage of 94%, indicating difficulties in interaction and building social relationships. Economic issues and family dynamics, each with a percentage of 93%, show the impact of financial and family issues on the well-being of santri. Adaptation to the school environment and curriculum is also an important issue, with 93% and 92% respectively, indicating difficulties in adapting. Study habits also need to be improved with a problem percentage of 92%. On the other hand, religious and moral issues have the lowest percentage at 62%, indicating that this aspect is relatively better. Health issues were also recorded lower at 83%. The identification of these problems provides valuable insights for designing more appropriate counseling interventions in pesantren. Thus, more in-depth analysis can help improve the well-being and development of santri.

Acknowledgement

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