STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING CAREER GUIDENCE
IN PANDEMIC TIMES

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Abstract: In the last two years, the policy of learning from home has forced career guidance activities to be modified. Therefore, action research is carried out to prevent the occurrence of career problems and as an effort to keep career guidance running optimally. The research design used follows the action research cycle of Kemmis & Mc Taggart. The research was carried out in three action cycles. The research was conducted in class XII MIA 8 with 35 research respondents. The career guidance strategy during the pandemic can be carried out in three stages of activity, namely optimizing group chat as a career information centre, assisting students in webinars conducted by universities, and holding online group guidance. Research recommends that guidance strategies still consider the principles of implementing guidance and therapeutic processes. This counselors must improve basic guidance skills and literacy skills so that digital career guidance helps plan a mature career.
Keywords: career guidance, strategies, pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic going on for the past two years has changed the system of life, including education services (Williamson, Eynon, & Potter, 2020). The home learning system is enforced as a health protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant changes are felt during the teaching and learning process. Both teachers and students feel culture shock because online learning is rarely done in various schools so far (Stasel & Evans, 2023). However, all parties must start using online learning so that the learning process can run well.

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The delivery of guidance and counselling services in schools has also adapted to these changes. The program that school counsellors designed has undergone many changes after the coronavirus was declared a pandemic, and learning was carried out online (Habibah et al., 2021; Listiyani & Sugiyo., 2021; Prawitasari, 2020). School counsellors must ensure that service activities continue, even though students are at home, by innovating and designing service media and technology systems in guidance and counselling services (Musdalifah, 2021). Classical guidance services, usually face-to-face, are provided online during the Covid 19 pandemic. The delivery process is carried out through the Google Classroom application, school counsellors and students discuss the material in the ongoing classical guidance service process (Alam & Akhmadi, 2021; Kamalia et al., 2020).

The career guidance program is the guidance and counselling service program most affected by the online service system. *Career guidance* is a regular activity that students need, especially students of class XII. The advantages of career guidance services compared to other services related to study further interests are, among others, 1) helping students prepare for decision making, 2) helping students develop some confidence in themselves, 3) helping students find some meaning from student activities at school, 4) providing tranquillity for students to recognize the good opportunities they find at school and outside of school, and 5) help students make good decisions for their future (Atmaja, 2014; Widiyanti, 2019)

Career guidance is carried out so that students are not mistaken in determining their career choices (Azhari, 2020). The digital age allows students to choose from an increasing diverse career choice. The main focus of career guidance for class XII is to facilitate the continuation of students' studies so that the majors and universities chosen are following their potential, interests, and talents. Generally, the activities in career guidance are divided into several stages, namely 1) providing career information in the form of college socialization, 2) directing and consulting, and 3) making career decisions. School Counselor also help students in the selection process to enter college.

Guidance and Counseling SMAN 2 Bandung has a variety of career guidance activities for students starting from university socialization and scholarship programs, student interest and talent tests, career day activities, to alumni sharing. At the end of every odd semester, class XII students always push the BK room for consultation, especially for the college entrance selection process. However, in the last two years, the policy of learning from home has

forced these activities to be modified. Previous research has shown several problems in students' career planning while studying from home, including 1) lack of information related to career planning, 2) lack of understanding of students to know themselves, and 3) unpreparedness of students in planning their careers (Aulia et al., 2021). Therefore, action research is carried out to prevent the occurrence of these problems and as an effort to keep career guidance running optimally.

METHOD

The research was conducted using action research methods (Coghlan, 2019). Action research is used to find strategies for implementing career guidance best used in learning from home settings. The research design used follows the action research cycle of Kemmis & Mc Taggart as follows (Putra et al, 2022).
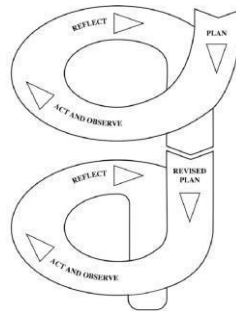

Figure 1. Kemmis & Mc Taggart Action Research Design

The researcher does planning, implementing actions, observing observations, and reflecting, which may then be followed by the next spiral cycle. In the initial planning, the researcher designed an action based on the evaluation of the career guidance strategy that had been done previously. The research was carried out in three action cycles (Kemmis et al, 2014).

The research was conducted in class XII MIA 8 with 35 research respondents. The selection of research respondents was carried out purposively. The research data was obtained by observing the activeness of respondents in career guidance activities and using an evaluation sheet for guidance and counseling service activities.

Analysis of research data was conducted to find evidence of increased student activity and the quality of services provided (Maselli et al, 2018). The data were analyzed by comparing the conditions found at the time of reflection with the planning done.

The analysis steps are selecting, simplifying, classifying, focusing, organizing (associating symptoms systematically and logically), and making an abstraction of the conclusion meaning from the results of the analysis (Suter et al, 2020).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

First cycle

Cycle one plans to use group chat as a career guidance strategy. The group chat is named "Rumpi BK (Rumah Impian Bimbingan dan Konseling)." The use of group chat is based on the results of the meeting of all school counselors at SMAN 2 Bandung so that the group chat is attended by all class XII students.

The action taken in the first cycle is to use group chat as a medium for delivering career information. The work steps implemented are

1. School counselors seek career information through MGBK and universities in collaboration with the BK unit of SMAN 2 Bandung,
2. School counselors forward selection and scholarship information messages in group chats,
3. Information is distributed in the form of e-flyers and activity explanation text.

An example of using group chat can be seen in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Screenshot of Group Cha

The observations showed that most students only read, and a few responded or interacted in group chats. If students are interested in the information shared, they will chat directly with the school counselor concerned. The school counselor could not explain in detail the information provided because it only forwarded messages received from other sources.

Based on these findings, the researcher reflects that a more interactive strategy is needed than using only group chat. Therefore, the researcher will conduct a virtual meeting that will present resource persons from the campus who have collaborated with the guidance and counseling of SMAN 2 Bandung.

Second Cycle

In the second cycle, the planning carried out was to bring students to webinar activities in collaboration with universities. This plan is based so that students can directly interact with the universities they are interested in.

The steps of the activities carried out in the second cycle of action are as follows.

1. School counselor looking for information on webinars and university socialization activities
2. The school counselor will forward the socialization information message to the group chat
3. School counselor accompanies students in socialization activities /webinars

Based on the observations made during the webinar, students seemed enthusiastic to interact directly with the resource persons. Compared to cycle 1, students can directly ask the clarity of the information provided in the webinar activity. However, the limitations found are limited time.

The results of the reflection in the second cycle indicate that it is necessary to hold a meeting as a follow-up to the results of the webinar so that the information obtained by students can be continued in planning the continuation of student studies. Researchers plan to conduct group guidance according to the interests of universities and majors.

Third Cycle

In the Third Cycle, the school counselor plans to conduct group guidance through a zoom meeting. In group guidance activities, the school counselor

continues to invite university representatives as resource persons in group discussions so that students can focus more on exploring their study interests. Group guidance activities in the third Cycle (figure 3) are carried out with the following steps.

1. School counselor takes an inventory of universities who will be resource persons in group guidance.
2. The school counselor invites students to participate in group guidance
3. The school counselor accompanies students in group guidance activities via Zoom.

Figure 3. Documentation of Group Guidance

The observations during group guidance showed that the discussion atmosphere was more lively and active than in webinars. Students also explained their desires and study plans in this activity, and resource persons provided answers and tips to strengthen their study plans. Thus the researcher reflects that the action research cycle is complete, with indicators of student interaction in responding to lecture opportunities and the fulfillment of the information needed by students.

Discussions

School career guidance strategies focus on delivering career information related to job interests and continuing studies. Relevant information will assist students

in exploring career options to make wise career decisions. Students as Generation Z are faced with various dynamic career choices, so they must adapt quickly to developments that occur. An important aspect is awareness of career orientation, exploration of career options, and preparing skills related to these career choices (Darmawani & Suryahadikusumah, 2021).

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, career guidance services could be carried out in various ways, either directly or indirectly. First, through information services that cover what is in oneself and the environment, secondly, placement services mean to provide direction so that students can fit themselves into academic study programs, and finally, orientation services that aim to introduce the world of careers to students (Fikriyani & Herdi, 2021). The career guidance strategy used is an assessment of the typology of personality at work (Suryahadikusumah et al., 2019), holding a teaching factory (Putranti, 2018), and holding a career day (Rahmadani, 2021).

In 2019, SMAN 2 Bandung used a career day strategy by holding an Edu-Expo event with the theme See The Future With Mind And Heart. This activity is a university exhibition that 23 universities attended. All students of class XII, even those below, had the opportunity to visit the university's booth and listen to the presentations given by the universities who toured each class.

However, this activity cannot be carried out again due to the pandemic. In this study, the improvement efforts were made with three strategies produced in the research cycle: conducting guidance through group chat, webinars, and virtual group guidance. The resulting strategy is based on the results of observations and reflections during the action research process.

The advantages of using group chat as a guidance strategy other than the media are commonly used by teachers and students. Group chat is also faster in sending messages, does not charge too much or with pulses but with data packages (Hariyadi et al., 2020). Chat rooms have the potential to be used by counsellors in group therapy, self-help, and providing support to clients (Pautina, 2017). In this study, it has not yet come to the use of group chat for group therapy because of the large number of participants who participate in group chats and the difficulty of monitoring the problems faced by students. Counsellors can use other media for packaging career information in developing career adaptability through microblogs (Suryahadikusumah, 2021).

The career guidance strategies produced in this research are webinars and virtual group guidance. The two strategies have differences in the atmosphere of the service performed. In the webinar, students join other schools. Hence,

they feel less flexible, while in virtual group guidance, students are freer to ask questions and explore career information conveyed by resource persons. Thus, virtual service delivery is not only related to the service format but also needs to pay attention to the nuances of the services provided.

The provision of online guidance services must still be followed by the skills of counsellors in carrying out guidance techniques (Gemmarahima & Nurlu'lu, 2021). In addition, in providing online services, school counsellors must have competence in digital literacy so that the service media used can be right on target (Julius et al., 2020). Guidance strategies will be more diverse if counsellors use design thinking in the innovation process (Suryahadikusumah & Sari, 2020). Thus, the strategy developed is attractive and has therapeutic experience as the core of guidance and counselling services.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The career guidance strategy during the pandemic can be carried out in three stages of activity, namely optimizing group chat as a career information centre, assisting students in webinars conducted by universities, and holding online group guidance . Research recommends that guidance strategies still consider the principles of implementing guidance and therapeutic processes. Thus counselors must improve basic guidance skills and literacy skills so that digital career guidance helps plan a mature career.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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