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The Relationship Between Goal Orientation and Student Engagement in Classroom Guidance Services Among Vocational High School Students in South Semarang

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the relationship between goal orientation and student engagement in classical guidance services among vocational high school students in the South Semarang region, Indonesia. Specifically, the study described the levels of students' goal orientation and engagement and investigated the relationships between mastery goal orientation, performance goal orientation, and student engagement. The study employed a quantitative ex post facto correlational design. A total of 317 students were selected from a population of 3,357 students using cluster sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Goal Orientation Scale and the Student Engagement Scale. Quantitative descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were utilized to analyze the data. The findings revealed that students' goal orientation was categorized as moderate, whereas student engagement was categorized as high. Inferential statistical analysis demonstrated a significant positive relationship between goal orientation and student engagement in classical guidance services ($R = .779$, $F = 242.975$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, mastery goal orientation showed a strong positive relationship with student engagement ($\beta = .779$, $t = 22.079$, $p < .01$), while performance goal orientation also significantly predicted student engagement ($\beta = .329$, $t = 6.194$, $p < .01$). The findings indicate that students with stronger goal orientation tendencies, particularly mastery goal orientation, are more likely to actively engage in classical guidance activities. Therefore, school counselors are encouraged to develop guidance services that foster both mastery and performance goal orientations to enhance student engagement and improve the effectiveness of classical guidance programs.

Keywords: *goal orientation; student engagement; classroom guidance services; vocational high school students; school counseling.*

INTRODUCTION

School counselors, as providers of guidance and counseling services in schools, are responsible for addressing various student problems within the domains of personal, social, academic, and career development (Dudi, 2017). Guidance and counseling services in schools are implemented through various service formats, one of which is classroom guidance services.

Classroom guidance refers to guidance services delivered to all students within a class or a combination of several classes. According to Winkel and Hastuti (2009), classroom guidance is

a form of guidance provided to a group of students within learning activities. Classroom guidance services are preventive in nature, aiming to prevent the emergence of more specific problems among students. This service format is considered efficient in relation to the number of students served and the limited number of school counselors available. In addition, classroom guidance is regarded as an effective and efficient strategy for delivering information to students within a classroom setting (Geltner & Clark, as cited in Budiamin, 2016). Through the implementation of classroom guidance services, students are expected to gain a better understanding of their potential, life plans, and strategies for achieving their future goals.

To achieve the objectives of guidance services, student engagement during classroom guidance activities is essential. Student engagement contributes significantly to the effectiveness of guidance services (Sunawan & Yani, 2016). Engaged students tend to actively participate and exert effort throughout the learning process, whereas students who lack engagement may hinder the achievement of service objectives. The primary purpose of classroom guidance services is to improve students' knowledge, skills, and competencies as preparation for their future lives (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, as cited in Fatimah, 2017). In line with this perspective, engagement represents a fundamental element that encourages students to actively participate in the learning process (Triyono, as cited in Putrayasa, 2013). Student engagement can be observed through behaviors such as asking questions, expressing opinions, completing assignments, responding to questions, collaborating with peers, and demonstrating responsibility toward assigned tasks. When students display these characteristics, the learning atmosphere becomes more conducive, allowing students to optimally develop their abilities.

According to Skinner (as cited in Muniroh, 2016), students who lack engagement tend to exhibit passive behaviors, procrastination, withdrawal, confusion, anxiety, boredom, lack of interest, and avoidance. Preliminary data collected from 45 students in vocational high schools in the South Semarang region indicated that approximately 50% of students demonstrated low levels of engagement during classroom guidance services. Students from three vocational schools in the region consistently showed low engagement levels. These findings suggest that many students tended to be passive, anxious, confused, uninterested, shy, and bored during classroom guidance sessions. Such conditions indicate that student engagement in classroom guidance services across vocational high schools in South Semarang remains inconsistent and inadequate.

Interviews with school counselors further revealed that some students frequently engaged in unrelated activities during guidance sessions, such as chatting with peers, using mobile phones, completing assignments from other subjects, and showing minimal enthusiasm during group discussions. This phenomenon contradicts the expectation that student engagement should facilitate effective guidance service delivery (Sunawan & Yani, 2016). Consequently, the effectiveness of classroom guidance services in vocational schools within the South Semarang region may be compromised.

Johnmarshall Reeve (2012) defines student engagement as the intensity of behavioral participation, emotional quality, and personal effort demonstrated actively by students in learning activities. In the context of this study, learning activities refer to classroom guidance services. Student engagement consists of three dimensions: emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and behavioral engagement (Fredricks, 2011). Emotional engagement refers to students' positive and negative reactions toward learning activities, teachers, and peers. Cognitive engagement involves students' attention and willingness to understand learning materials, while behavioral engagement reflects the quality of students' motivation as demonstrated during learning activities. Enhancing student engagement is crucial because engagement reflects students' willingness to

participate actively in classroom guidance activities. Students who possess high engagement levels tend to enjoy learning both at school and independently (Syah, 2016).

According to Gibbs and Poskitt (2010), several factors contribute to student engagement, including teacher-student relationships, peer support, self-efficacy, motivation and interest, self-regulated learning, goal orientation, cognitive autonomy, and students' personal dispositions. One important factor associated with engagement in classroom guidance services is goal orientation. Ames and Archer (as cited in Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008) explain that goal orientation reflects the standards students use to evaluate their performance and success, providing direction, motivation, and strategies for achieving desired outcomes. Goal orientation determines how individuals strive to achieve their goals.

Moreover, the dimensions of goal orientation are considered important contributors to student engagement (Elliot, as cited in Nuraeni, 2016). Students differ in their goal orientations because each individual possesses different patterns of beliefs (Elliot & Church, as cited in Steinmayr, 2011). These belief patterns influence how students approach, engage in, and respond to various learning situations. Goal orientation is commonly divided into two dimensions: mastery goal orientation and performance goal orientation (Ames, as cited in Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008).

Mastery goal orientation reflects students' focus on learning, mastering tasks according to personal standards, developing new skills, improving competence, seeking challenges, and gaining deeper understanding (Ames, as cited in Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). In contrast, performance goal orientation emphasizes demonstrating competence and obtaining favorable evaluations from others. Students with performance goal orientation tend to focus on outperforming others and avoiding negative judgments. Both dimensions are important in fostering high levels of student engagement (Elliot, as cited in Nuraeni, 2016). The relationship between goal orientation and student engagement can be understood through the interaction between engagement dimensions and goal orientation dimensions.

Interviews with counselors also indicated that students attempted to overcome challenges and sought understanding during classroom guidance activities, suggesting relatively high levels of goal orientation. However, preliminary scale data showed that student engagement levels remained low. This contradiction differs from previous findings by Mahesa (2013), which reported that higher goal orientation is associated with higher student engagement. Ideally, students with strong goal orientation should possess clear motivation and direction that encourage greater engagement during classroom guidance activities.

From a counseling perspective, classroom guidance services aim to improve students' knowledge, skills, and competencies for future life preparation (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, as cited in Fatimah, 2017). Therefore, student engagement is essential for ensuring effective service implementation. When students actively participate throughout the guidance process, school counselors can identify the success of classroom guidance services (Dwistia, Purwanto, & Sunawan, 2016). In addition, students with strong goal orientation possess clearer motivation and direction that encourage active engagement during learning activities (Mahesa, 2013). Consequently, both goal orientation and student engagement are essential components for achieving effective classroom guidance services and supporting students' personal development.

Based on the phenomena identified in vocational high schools throughout the South Semarang region, this study aimed to further investigate the relationship between goal orientation and student engagement in classroom guidance services. The findings are expected to provide

school counselors with a clearer understanding of student engagement conditions and the factors contributing to engagement during classroom guidance activities.

METHOD

This study employed an ex post facto quantitative correlational design. The independent variable in this study was goal orientation (X), which consisted of two sub-variables: mastery goal orientation and performance goal orientation. The dependent variable was student engagement (Y). The study aimed to describe the existing conditions related to the variables and to analyze the relationships among these variables both partially and simultaneously. In addition, a descriptive research approach was used to identify the characteristics of each variable.

The population of this study consisted of 3,357 students from three public vocational high schools in the South Semarang region, Indonesia, including 1,211 students from SMK Negeri 4 Semarang, 1,255 students from SMK Negeri 7 Semarang, and 891 students from SMK Negeri 8 Semarang. A total of 317 students participated in the study, comprising 115 students from SMK Negeri 4 Semarang, 118 students from SMK Negeri 7 Semarang, and 84 students from SMK Negeri 8 Semarang. The participants were selected using a cluster sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2016), cluster sampling is used to determine samples based on predetermined population regions or groups.

Data were collected using two psychological scales: the Goal Orientation Scale and the Student Engagement Scale. The collected data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive statistics and inferential statistical analysis through multiple regression techniques. Prior to conducting the regression analysis, several assumption tests were performed, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests, to ensure that the data met the statistical requirements for regression analysis.

RESULT

The results of the quantitative descriptive analysis for each variable in this study are presented based on the mean scores, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of Quantitative Descriptive Analysis

Variable	N	Mean
Goal Orientation	317	3.26
Student Engagement	317	3.55

Based on Table 1, the mean score of the goal orientation variable was categorized as moderate ($M = 3.26$), whereas the student engagement variable was categorized as high ($M = 3.55$). Prior to conducting multiple regression analysis, several assumption tests were performed to ensure that the data met the required statistical assumptions. The assumption tests indicated satisfactory results, including: (1) a normality test showing that the data were normally distributed with a probability value greater than .05 ($p = .206$); (2) a linearity test indicating a significant linear relationship with a deviation from linearity value of $.026 < .05$; (3) a multicollinearity test showing a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of 1.218, indicating no multicollinearity within the regression model; and (4) a heteroscedasticity test yielding a significance value of $.981 > .05$, indicating the absence of heteroscedasticity symptoms. The results of the multiple regression

analysis revealed the relationships between the variables examined in this study, including the relationship between goal orientation and student engagement, the relationship between mastery goal orientation and student engagement, and the relationship between performance goal orientation and student engagement, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis of Student Engagement

Variable	R	R ²	F	β	t
Goal Orientation	.779	.607	242.975	–	–
Mastery Goal Orientation	–	–	–	.779	22.079
Performance Goal Orientation	–	–	–	.329	6.194

Note: All predictors were significant at $p < .01$.

The analysis demonstrated a significant positive relationship between goal orientation and student engagement ($R = .779$, $F = 242.975$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, mastery goal orientation was significantly associated with student engagement ($\beta = .779$, $t = 22.079$, $p < .01$). Similarly, performance goal orientation also showed a significant positive relationship with student engagement ($\beta = .329$, $t = 6.194$, $p < .01$).

DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive analysis indicated that the level of students' goal orientation in participating in classroom guidance services among vocational high school students in the South Semarang region was categorized as moderate. This finding was reflected in the high category of mastery goal orientation and the moderate category of performance goal orientation. According to Ames (as cited in Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008), students with mastery goal orientation tend to focus on learning, mastering tasks based on personal standards, developing new skills, improving competencies, seeking challenging tasks, and gaining deeper understanding. In contrast, students with performance goal orientation focus on demonstrating competence and on how their abilities are evaluated by others. For example, such students strive to exceed normative performance standards, appear more competent than others, avoid looking incapable, and seek recognition based on their performance.

The findings of this study showed that mastery goal orientation was categorized as high, indicating that students tended to focus on understanding the materials delivered during classroom guidance services, as well as improving their abilities and competencies based on their own personal standards. For instance, when students perceived a need to better understand the material presented by the school counselor, they tended to pay closer attention and remain focused during the guidance session. Meanwhile, performance goal orientation was categorized as moderate, suggesting that some students were more concerned with how their abilities were perceived and evaluated by others. For example, when students did not fully understand the material, they attempted to concentrate more carefully so that they could answer questions posed by counselors or peers appropriately. Overall, these findings suggest that students were more intrinsically motivated to improve their competencies and seek challenges during classroom guidance activities.

The level of student engagement in classroom guidance services among vocational high school students in the South Semarang region was categorized as high. This indicates that students demonstrated behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement during classroom guidance

activities. In line with Skinner's perspective (as cited in Muniroh, 2016), students who lack engagement are typically characterized by passivity, procrastination, withdrawal, anxiety, confusion, boredom, lack of interest, and avoidance during classroom activities. However, these characteristics were generally absent among the students participating in this study. Furthermore, the high level of student engagement suggests that classroom guidance services were implemented effectively, as students were willing to devote time and effort to improving their knowledge, skills, and competencies as preparation for their future lives.

The results of this study also revealed a strong positive relationship between goal orientation and student engagement in classroom guidance services among vocational high school students in the South Semarang region. In other words, higher levels of goal orientation were associated with higher levels of student engagement during classroom guidance activities. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Mahesa (2013), which found a positive and significant relationship between goal orientation and student engagement. Furthermore, student engagement was found to correlate more strongly with mastery goal orientation than with performance goal orientation. The researchers assume that this stronger relationship may be explained by the presence of intrinsic motivation within mastery goals, whereas performance goals are more closely associated with extrinsic motivation and the desire to demonstrate competence to others (Dweck, 1999; Miller, Greene, Montalvo, Ravindran, & Nichols, 1996, as cited in Gibbs & Poskitt, 2010).

When comparing the strength of the correlations, mastery goal orientation demonstrated a stronger relationship with student engagement than performance goal orientation. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Arild Diseth and Oddrun Samdal (2015), which showed that mastery goal orientation had a stronger correlation with student engagement compared to performance goal orientation. Steele and Fullagar (as cited in Mahesa, 2013) further emphasized that student engagement is closely associated with intrinsic motivation, which serves as a bridge linking mastery goals and student engagement. Intrinsic motivation encourages students to actively participate in the learning process and enhances their performance within mastery-oriented learning contexts.

Another possible explanation is that students with mastery goal orientation tend to achieve better academic outcomes because they continuously strive to develop their competencies. In contrast, students with performance goal orientation are generally more focused on obtaining social recognition for their abilities. These differing perspectives influence the efforts and behaviors displayed by students during learning activities. Nevertheless, it remains important for school counselors to motivate students to apply and follow up on the materials provided during classroom guidance sessions after students have understood the content.

Duchesne, Larose, and Feng (2017) stated that goal orientation serves as a primary driver of changes in student engagement within school learning contexts. The findings of this study support the existence of a positive reciprocal relationship between goal orientation and student engagement. Goal orientation determines how students strive to achieve desired outcomes during classroom guidance services. Similarly, Sunawan and Yani (2016) argued that student engagement contributes significantly to the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. Therefore, goal orientation can be considered an important factor that promotes student engagement and enhances the effectiveness of classroom guidance services.

The effectiveness of classroom guidance services is also closely related to the role of school counselors. Indicators of successful guidance implementation can be identified through the roles performed by group leaders and group members at each stage of the service process, including the

formation, transition, activity, and closing stages (Dwistia, 2016). In this context, the group leader refers to the school counselor. As providers of guidance and counseling services, school counselors are expected to address students' personal, social, academic, and career-related concerns (Dudi, 2017). Classroom guidance services therefore represent one of the important service formats through which counselors can foster both goal orientation and student engagement among students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that students' goal orientation was categorized as moderate, while student engagement in classroom guidance services was categorized as high. The study also revealed significant relationships between goal orientation and student engagement, between mastery goal orientation and student engagement, and between performance goal orientation and student engagement. However, the relationship between performance goal orientation and student engagement was found to be relatively weaker compared to mastery goal orientation. Therefore, school counselors are encouraged to develop innovative classroom guidance services aimed at strengthening students' performance goal orientation, such as designing activities that help students respond positively to evaluations and judgments from others.

Furthermore, given the strong relationship between goal orientation and student engagement, school counselors are expected to actively facilitate the development of both mastery and performance goal orientations to enhance student engagement during classroom guidance services. This may be achieved by maintaining the quality of classroom guidance programs and continuing effective service practices that have already been successfully implemented. Such efforts are expected to improve the overall effectiveness of classroom guidance services. Future researchers are also encouraged to conduct similar studies in different settings and to explore other variables related to student engagement that were not examined in the present study.

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