

Web-based Cyber Counseling to Improve Students' Counseling Interests

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Abstract

This study attempted to improve students' counseling interests by using a Web medium in form of Cyber Counseling. To achieve such purpose, this study employed one group pre-test post-test design. Meanwhile, the instrument used to collect the data was counseling interest scale. The subjects of this study were 6 students chosen by purposive sampling technique. The researchers analyzed their data by using wilcoxon non-parametric analysis. The results showed that web-based Cyber Counseling effectively improved students' counseling interests ($Z = -2.226$, $p < 0.05$). This result asserts that Cyber Counseling has an implication toward the optimization of counselors' roles and professionalism in the utilization of Cyber Counseling for the development of Information and Technology resources development.

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INTRODUCTION

The coming of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 has changed people lifestyle toward a technology-based activity complexity. Technology has contributed many conveniences as well as new ways of doing daily activities (Ngafifi, 2014). Rapid changes and advances in every aspect of human life change the prior condition of human activity, which was traditional to modern.

This kind of changes have at least provided opportunity as well as challenges to every institution, in this case, is education, and specifically at school. For example, the ability of students to utilize ICT has become a new requirement for an effective educational system. (Akbarini, Murtini, and Rahmanto, 2018; Fitriyadi, 2013). Besides, Elleven and Allen (Bastemur, S., and Bastemur, E., 2015) state that the growth of technology usage would create opportunities for counselors in providing online counseling as an alternative to traditional counseling. Therefore, it is inevitable that the alignment of educational needs towards the development of technology that has developed so far seems to be an absolute number that cannot be bargained for anymore. As a result, it will be very relevant to conclude that technology is strongly required in the implementation of the guidance and counseling field in today's era.

The urgency of the implementation of technology-based guidance and counseling is not merely based on times pursuing, but also school services maximization. This is in line with Gibson's statement that counselors need to be competent in using a computer, and realize that the development of times can contribute major implications for their practices (Gibson, and Mitchell, 2011).

Guidance and counseling services hold important roles and tasks for students' development. The presence of counselors at schools enables students' self-development based on their needs, talents, and interests at school. Based on its definition, counseling is assistance given by counselors to students to effectively be

able to adjust to themselves and environments (Prayitno, and Amti, 2012).

Students' interests in joining counseling activities were varied; some were active and enthusiastic about the offered counseling programs by the school, while some were not. This interest deals with a situation where students think, concern about knowing, have a sense of pleasure, and willingness to learn and carry out guidance and counseling services provided by the school (Zahara, 2017). Therefore, the success of guidance and counseling services at school would be maximum when students have a high interest in the counseling activities at school.

Unfortunately, the implementation of guidance and counseling services at school had a lot of corrections. Based on the preliminary study done in one of Public Senior High School (SMAN) in Bojonegoro showed that students' interests in counseling activities were very low. In that school, the researchers obtained the data showing that the X class there were 6 of students having high counseling interest, 69% have a fair interest, and 25% having low counseling interests. Thus, there were more than 90% of students needed to be encouraged in terms of their counseling interests.

Based on the results of an interview done by the researchers to the school counselors, it was known that the current policy of five days school sometimes forced the activity of face to face counseling activity to take the credits of other subjects or be carried out after school hours depending on the level of problems being encountered. Besides, several students argued that they were less interested in having counseling activity inside Guidance and Counseling (BK) room caused by a trigger to do their first time counseling activity. They hesitated for their first counseling. Also, it was known that several students preferred to have a casual discussion outside the BK room to make it not tied to formal and strict activities. By doing so, they could tell their problems flexibly and relatively. It showed that there was a gap between time and place for the expected implementation of counseling activities by students.

By referring to the above problems, it can be concluded that there is a need for a new counseling model which can answer students' need in today's era where the access of services and information through technology has been well advancing and vast, as well as save time and place to be practical, and encourage the ease of access of communication in counseling activities by students.

Cyber Counseling through website medium is an appropriate counseling alternative to be used as a connector for long-distance counseling, which is limited by face to face access. In association with its term, Cyber Counseling or online counseling is a therapeutic intervention transmission which uses World Wide Web by employing computer as a medium for communication between professional counselors and clients (Lau, Jaladin, and Abdullah, 2013)

Cyber Counseling surely needs to be packaged in such a way following the ethics of the implementation of Cyber Counseling (Kraus, Stricker, and Speyer, 2010; NBCC, 2001; Petrus, and Sudiby, 2017). Actually, in its implementation, Cyber Counseling has the same processes as common face to face counseling and is adjusted to the needs existing in the field (Ifdil, and Ardi, 2013; Prayitno, and Amti, 2012). Also, the principles of Cyber Counseling implementation need to be taken into account so that services in schools can be packed with ethical aspects that reflect the counselor's professionalism and academic aspects which will later build a good academic scientific culture.

The method of online counseling mediated by Web in counseling situation provides significant benefit, namely the possibility of online self-disclosure. For more, anonymous interaction can give broad facilities and personal freedom, which frees clients to express themselves (Esere, Omotosho, and Idowu, 2012). The concept of freedom expression and unlimited self-openness in online communication which is mediated by Web makes students feel free to deliver any problems so that it can be a good stimulus for them as well as improve students' interests in school counseling activities.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of web-based Cyber Counseling to improve students' counseling interests. The use of technology-based media by school would provide a distinct benefit for the school itself. One of it is that the major changes in information technology that occur in the global environment require the development of an open and accessible education system for all those who need it and not limited to age, sex, location, and socio-economic conditions, especially in terms of counseling services (Lubis, 2018; Wardoyo, 2016).

METHODS

The subjects of this study were 6 Tenth grade students of Public Senior High School 1 who experienced low counseling interest. Their data were collected by using counseling interest scale. This instrument was developed based on the theory of interest. The results of the validity and reliability tests showed that 34 items had a score correlation range with a total of between 0.3 to 0.71. Meanwhile, the instrument reliability test with alpha technique resulted in the value of 0.906.

The research stages in this study were: In the first stage, the researchers selected subjects by distributing counseling interest scale to 60 students and obtained six students who had low counseling interest and were involved in being treated by using Cyber Counseling intervention.

The second stage was done by providing training and education, starting from the concept of services implementation, how to use the web, and ethical issues in providing Cyber Counseling to school counselors. Through this activity, the formation of perception on counselors regarding Face to Face and online counseling service so that the counselors did not eliminate the principles of face to face counseling. This matter was also deeply explained in the implementation of guidebook to be used as a service guide.

The third stage was providing Cyber Counseling orientation of the six selected students, starting from understanding the importance of model implementation and

affirming that the Cyber Counseling service was not intended to replace Face to Face Counseling activities but as a part of face-to-face pre-counseling process. Next, the aspect of the Web usage, where students could access the Web of Cyber Counseling via URL <http://ruangkonseling.com> (Figure 1) do the Registration process and log in to the Web (Figure 2). After entering, students could create a chat room to start the consultation activities by determining the desired field of assistance, the topic of the problem, the selected counselor and the last, writing down the problems experienced (Figure 3). After the process of creating a chat room is successful, students were directed to the Chatbox display between students and counselors (Figure 4).

The fourth stage, the researchers carried out the intervention process. The intervention was carried out outside of school hours, the implementation of Cyber Counseling intervention through the chat method was conducted for 14 days or until the consultation process was declared completed or it was transferred into face-to-face counseling by the counselor.

The last stage, post-test was given to see changes in students' counseling interest. Besides, evaluation and follow up on the online counseling through Ruang Konseling Web were also done in this stage, particularly on the impact of the intervention given by the counselors which covered the change in students' counseling interest. After that, counsees were asked to commit to building their counseling interest at school after the online counseling was over to have a permanent change in the interest.

The implementation of web medium-based Cyber Counseling to improve students' counseling interest had the basic format of the communication interaction among individuals, namely counselors with counsees through chatting feature which has been adjusted to the needs of students. It covered a history of counseling that has been passed, printed version of the history of consultation as assistance in the follow-up of Face to Face counseling, assistance fields, user profiles, etc.



Figure 1. Display Front page

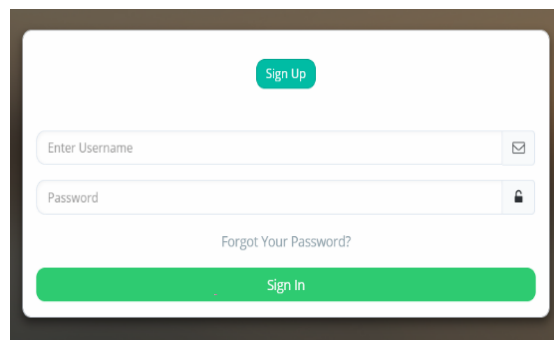


Figure 2. Display Sign Up and Sign In Menu

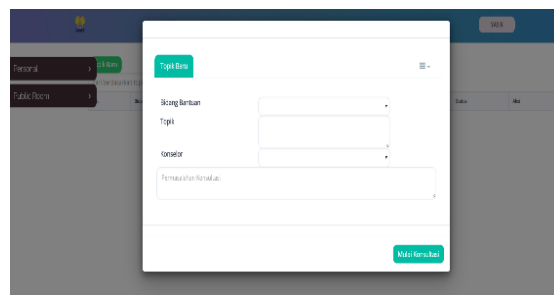


Figure 3. Student Page Views

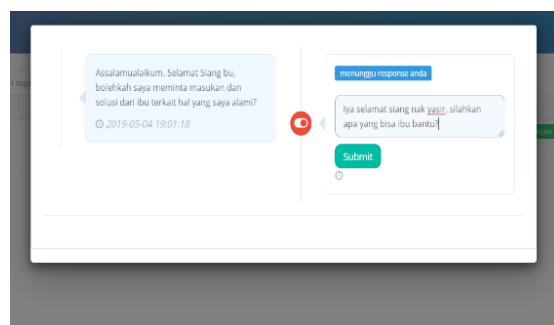


Figure 4. Chat Display

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the pre-test and post-test of students' counseling interest are presented in

table 1. According to table 1, students' counseling interest seemed improved after receiving Web-based Cyber Counseling. It is seen from the mean scores during pre-test of 84, and post-test of 107.33. The number increased to 20.33. Therefore, these results affirmed that Cyber Counseling could improve students' counseling interest. ($Z = -2.226$ $p = < 0.05$).

Table 1. Wilcoxon Test Analysis

	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	84	107.33
SD	3.28	6.43
Min	78	99
Max	87	118
Z		-2.22
p		< 0.05

The effectiveness of Web-based Cyber Counseling to improve counseling interest at school could be seen from the treatment given by the counselors in building a relationship and fostering new perceptions on counseling activities through group counseling. Additionally, self-openness principle and freedom of expression through the art of writing or typing on Cyber Counseling supported students' interest in counseling activities. This is in line with a theory (Esere, Omotosho, and Idowu, 2012). Which states that online counseling method can give considerable benefits, namely the existence of online self-disclosure, anonymous interaction provided broad facilities and personal freedom and privacy, which freed the client for expression.

The presence of Cyber Counseling could answer a research suggestion (Bastemur, S., and Bastemur, E., 2015) that it is a chance for counselors to provide online counseling as an alternative to traditional counseling. Also, this Cyber Counseling helps form the future of counseling to be more professional. It means that Cyber Counseling is effective to be a part of the counseling service because of its function, which enables unreachable activities by the past traditional counseling services.

Also, Cyber Counseling supports the relevance of the theory on the need to provide the comfort of assistance needed by counselees when facing a problem that is impossible to be solved in face to face (Gibson, and Mitchell, 2012). Other

ideas also reveal that Cyber Counseling is also a resource that can be adjusted and flexible with the potential to complete and support other types of interventions and not be created as a replacement for face-to-face intervention (Lau, Jaladin, and Abdullah, 2013). This surely will create an elaboration of innovative service activities and provide encouragement and stimuli for students to get to know and get closer to counseling activities so that the activities are effective in fostering students' counseling interest at school.

Similar to the above statement, the results of the study have shown that the way individuals interacted with electronic sources of as a means of communication was the same as the way they interacted with other people (Andrade in Shih, Hsu, Yen, and Lin, 2012). For more, in the context of individuals interaction, online self-disclosure is more likely to occur than face to face (Joinson, Schofield, Buchanan, and Reips, 2008). Indeed, the presence of this cyber-service encouraged students as well as stimuli for their first efforts to get to know and get closer to cyber-based counseling so that it would improve access to Face to Face counseling activities at school.

Cyber Counseling has been able to help develop broader counseling services that the service cannot only be done in Face to Face, but also can be implemented with the help of internet network technology. That is, Cyber Counseling has several advantages, namely (1) it can save permanent records of the process of counseling. This will be beneficial for clients, counselors, and counselor supervisors, (2) helping individuals reflecting their experiences by the art of typing, (3) clients can express their feeling in their "present" condition. They can also directly type and send an email when they get depressed or panic without having to wait until the next counseling session (Murphy and Mitchell in Mcleod, 2008). Further, Online Counseling is also very suitable given to clients who (1) are geographically isolated, (2) have physical disabilities, (3) do not want to do counseling, and (4) prefer writing rather than speaking (Gladding, 2012).

The relationship between the improvement of students' counseling interest through web

technology-based counseling model, namely Cyber Counseling is based on theories, and previous study findings have fostered students in participating in counseling different from face to face one and aroused their passion through freedom of expression and broad openness beforehand. This Cyber Counseling could improve five counseling interest aspects, namely attention, interest, desire, beliefs, and actions towards counseling service activities at school.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the effects of Web-based Cyber Counseling for students' counseling interest. These effects can be seen from the results of the pre-test and post-test that have been done showing that there were differences between before and after treatment.

In this study, online counseling was carried out in an individual format. For future studies, researchers are suggested to conduct online counseling in groups to clients with similar problems. They can apply it to other levels besides high school level, as in vocational students and junior high school level. With the group format and broader level application, it can make counseling services more effective and efficient in reaching students who have difficulty following counseling activities.

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