

The Role of Guidance Counselors in Junior High Schools in Addressing Drug Abuse Among Students

Varisa Nuralya¹, Mardi Lestari², Azam Arifyadi³, Nur Eka Wahyuningsih Ariyadi⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Universiti Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the role of guidance and counseling teachers in preventing drug abuse among students. The sample in this study consisted of 5 participants, namely three students and two guidance and counseling teachers, using an interview instrument as the data collection instrument. The data obtained was then processed and analyzed using descriptive qualitative methods. The results of the study show that guidance and counseling teachers play an important role in preventive efforts through routine socialization activities about the dangers of drugs, instilling an attitude of rejection of peer pressure, and providing individual and group counseling services. Guidance and counseling teachers also conduct early detection through behavioral observation, personal approaches to students who show indications of drug abuse, and collaborate with the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) and parents in the case handling process. In addition, students involved in drug abuse were given follow-up assistance in the form of routine check-ups at the BNN according to the severity of their condition. The findings of the study reveal that collaborative efforts between guidance counselors, schools, the BNN, and families play a significant role in creating a safe school environment and supporting the prevention of drug abuse. This study confirms that the role of guidance counsellors extends beyond problem handling to include character development, awareness-raising, and the formation of healthy behaviours in students.

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Corresponding Author:

Varisa Nuralya

Guidance and Counselling, Department of Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.

Email: varisanuralya@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Schools, as centres of educational activity, are structured institutions that play a role in improving the quality of education. As micro-institutions that play a direct role in producing a high-quality Indonesian generation, schools should receive significant attention from the government and society. Schools that correlate with school quality should ideally produce good inputs, processes, and outputs [1]. In this context, schools are not only

responsible for academic achievement but also for shaping students' character and behaviour.

Junior high school is considered a period of childhood development or puberty among adolescents, during which students' development is inseparable from various issues that shape their inner thoughts [2]. This developmental stage is marked by emotional instability, curiosity, and a strong influence from peers, which can increase students' vulnerability to negative behaviours.

For example, in their social interactions at school, students are very easily involved in disputes or drug addiction problems influenced by other friends, resulting in students receiving punishment or reprimands from teachers. SMP Negeri 16 Palu is a school located in Lambara Village, Tawaeli District, Palu City, where, every week, students still experience cases that require them to enter the Guidance and Counselling (BK) room. These conditions illustrate that behavioural problems among students remain a serious challenge in the school environment.

The cases they encountered included student truancy, fights between students, drug abuse, and bullying. This made it difficult for the guidance counsellors at SMP Negeri 16 Palu to address problem students at school, but other subject teachers also helped address them. The National Narcotics Agency has also conducted inspections to check students showing signs of drug addiction and smoking. After the inspections, they were warned by the National Narcotics Agency and the school authorities. This highlights the importance of students protecting themselves from negative influences at school. Therefore, I conducted this study to help students at SMP Negeri 16 Palu maintain and improve their personalities, thereby avoiding the aforementioned issues [3]. This situation indicates the need for systematic preventive efforts involving multiple stakeholders within and outside the school [4].

To address problems at SMP Negeri 16 Palu, teachers must play a role in preventing undesirable incidents that could have fatal consequences. For example, student interactions at school can influence the abuse of drugs, alcohol, and other addictive substances among students at the school. Among teachers, guidance and counselling teachers play a strategic role because they directly address students' personal, social, and behavioural issues.

Based on the initial interviews I conducted with guidance counsellors at SMP Negeri 16 Palu (Lun Fifat S.Pd and Lutfia S.Pd, G.r), I obtained information that several ninth-grade students had abused drugs. This was due to promiscuous behaviour with fellow students and to students' lack of attention to controlling themselves in social interactions at school. These findings indicate that peer influence and inadequate self-regulation are dominant factors contributing to drug abuse among students.

The results of this interview indicate that students who abuse drugs receive special treatment from the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) in collaboration with the school principal and guidance counsellors, so that the BNN can go directly to the school to deal with students who abuse drugs. Students who have tested positive in urine tests are given a schedule for routine check-ups at the BNN. The BNN schedule is twice a week for students in severe condition and once a week for students in less severe condition. This collaborative

approach reflects an integrated effort to ensure both prevention and rehabilitation for affected students.

The results of observations conducted by guidance counsellors, including direct observation by the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), also involved cooperation with parents so they could help and accompany their children during routine check-ups. Guidance counsellors at SMP Negeri 16 Palu also provide program services and classical services to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs. The National Narcotics Agency also participates in socialisation activities at the school during every MPLS activity or on certain days. Therefore, understanding the role of guidance counsellors in this context becomes essential as a basis for strengthening drug abuse prevention programs in schools.

2. METHOD

The research method used is qualitative. Qualitative research is a research method grounded in philosophy used to examine scientific conditions (experiments) in which the researcher acts as an instrument, and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques place greater emphasis on meaning [5]. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on understanding processes, roles, and experiences rather than measuring variables numerically.

Qualitative research with a descriptive approach aims to reveal phenomena encountered in the field as they are and to systematically describe the facts and characteristics of guidance and counselling teachers [6]. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to capture the real conditions and actual practices of guidance counsellors in the school setting.

Qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observations of people and behaviours. For example, sentences from interviews between researchers and informants. In line with this character, this study uses a qualitative approach to obtain comprehensive information on the role of teachers in overcoming drug abuse problems at SMP Negeri 16 Palu. Thus, this method is considered appropriate to explore in depth the preventive and intervention efforts implemented by guidance counsellors in addressing drug abuse among students.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

The research results presented were obtained from interviews conducted in July-August with three students and two guidance and counselling teachers. Seven figures and tables. The same data cannot be presented in both table and image form. The research results are discussed to answer the research questions, objectives, and hypotheses. It is highly recommended that the discussion focus on why and how the research findings were obtained, and on the extent to which they can be applied to other relevant issues. Therefore, this section emphasises an in-depth interpretation of interview data related to the role of guidance counsellors in preventing drug abuse among students.

The research was conducted using interviews, beginning with the selection of three students and two guidance counsellors. The researcher then interviewed the three students and two guidance counsellors, who had been selected according to criteria established by the

researcher. The description of the interview results is also explained based on the research subjects and indicators as follows:

What is the role of guidance counsellors in preventing drug abuse among students?

Of course, we guidance and counselling teachers conduct socialisation about what “drugs” are to students, and students also already know what the effects are if they experience the symptoms of drug use. We conduct socialisation every Monday during the flag ceremony. Additionally, we provide students with an understanding of rejecting peers who are involved in drugs, and we create posters to be displayed on the bulletin board about anti-drug initiatives. We also approach students who we observe exhibiting signs of drug use. This approach is also intended to encourage students to speak up and express what they are feeling and why they are engaging in such behaviour. These findings indicate that preventive efforts are carried out systematically through educational, persuasive, and personal approaches.

"The role of guidance and counselling teachers, The three students I interviewed observed what guidance and counselling teachers do at school. They said that school guidance and counselling teachers have many tasks to help students who have problems, and that they never get angry at students. Guidance and counselling teachers always ask students with problems in a friendly manner. Guidance and counselling teachers also pay close attention to students at school, whether in terms of their treatment or behaviour. With that in mind, guidance and counselling teachers often conduct drug awareness campaigns during every assembly. This statement reflects students' positive perceptions of guidance counsellors as supportive figures in the school environment.

From the interview results I quoted above, this is how guidance and counselling teachers play their role in schools, and students also pay attention to their duties.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that guidance and counseling teachers play a significant role in preventing drug abuse among junior high school students through preventive, educational, and supportive approaches. Preventive efforts such as routine socialisation, anti-drug campaigns, and the provision of information services help increase students' awareness of the dangers of drugs. This finding is in line with previous studies, which emphasise that preventive education delivered consistently in schools can reduce students' risk of engaging in drug abuse behaviours [7], [8]. Early prevention carried out by guidance counsellors is particularly important during adolescence, a developmental phase characterised by emotional instability and strong peer influence.

Furthermore, the results show that guidance counsellors employ personal and empathetic approaches when dealing with students who show indications of drug abuse. Students perceive guidance counsellors as approachable, patient, and supportive figures who do not judge them when problems arise. This finding supports research by Nur [9] and Said and Batubara [10], which found that a positive colour–student relationship fosters openness and trust, thereby making counselling interventions more effective. A non-punitive,

humanistic approach allows students to express their problems freely and facilitates early detection of risky behaviours.

Another important finding is the collaborative role of guidance counsellors with external institutions, particularly the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), as well as with parents. The involvement of BNN in drug testing, rehabilitation monitoring, and socialisation activities reflects an integrated prevention and intervention strategy. This result is consistent with studies highlighting that cooperation between schools, families, and external agencies strengthens drug abuse prevention efforts and ensures more comprehensive handling of cases [11], [12]. Parental involvement is also crucial, as family supervision and emotional support contribute significantly to students' recovery and behavioural change.

Finally, the findings underline that drug abuse prevention is not solely the responsibility of guidance counsellors but also requires active participation from students themselves. Students are expected to develop awareness, resist peer pressure, and engage in positive school activities. This aligns with previous research indicating that student participation in extracurricular activities and peer-based prevention programs can reduce exposure to risky behaviours, including drug use [13]. Therefore, effective drug abuse prevention in schools should be viewed as a shared responsibility involving guidance counsellors, teachers, parents, external institutions, and students in creating a supportive and drug-free school environment.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion of the research entitled "The Role of Guidance Counselors in Junior High Schools in Preventing Drug Abuse Among Students, involving guidance counsellors and three students, the conclusions are as follows. These conclusions are drawn to address the research objectives and summarise the study's main findings.

Guidance and Counselling Teachers (BKs) play a central role in education, with the main task of assisting students in their psychological, social, and academic development. This role positions guidance counsellors as key actors in fostering students' overall development.

Guidance counsellors provide guidance to help students identify their educational goals and overcome various problems that hinder learning, both inside and outside of school. Through counselling services, guidance counsellors help students develop their full potential, improve their academic performance, and enhance their psychological well-being so they can effectively face academic and personal challenges. Such services contribute to students' resilience and adaptive behaviour.

Guidance counsellors take preventive measures by raising awareness about the dangers of drugs and addiction, as well as the risks of underestimating them. They also encourage their students to actively participate in positive activities, such as study groups, organisations, and extracurricular activities, to avoid the negative influence of drugs. In addition, guidance counsellors perform an advocacy function by intervening with students who are at risk for protection and drug use, coordinating with parents to help resolve the

problem. With an open approach and the creation of a supportive school environment, guidance counsellors contribute to fostering a healthy school culture protected from the threat of narcotics. This integrated approach strengthens prevention efforts at both the individual and institutional levels.

Students can also play an active role in preventing drug abuse in several important ways. First, students need a strong understanding of the dangers of drugs through learning and available information, so they have a high level of awareness. Second, students are expected to make good use of their time by participating in positive activities, such as joining organisations, engaging in extracurricular activities, and participating in drug prevention training, to develop their potential and avoid negative influences. Third, students must have the courage to report any drug trafficking or protection in the school environment to teachers or authorities. Student involvement is therefore essential in supporting school-based prevention programs.

In addition, students must be able to avoid peer pressure and build healthy friendships to protect themselves from drug propaganda. All these steps require students' understanding and commitment to create a drug-free school environment. This collective commitment is crucial for sustaining long-term prevention efforts.

The results of our previous research were that we studied the role of teachers in schools and how they deal with students who abuse drugs, alcohol, and other addictive substances. The differences were in the schools' locations, the time, and the year. These differences indicate that although contexts may vary, the role of guidance counsellors remains consistently important across settings.

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