

# Effectiveness of Psychoeducation Techniques and Guidance Counseling Services for Non-Guidance Counseling Primary Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

*There is still limited availability of primary level school counselors, even though they play a significant role in helping primary level students grow and develop academically, socially, and emotionally. However, non-counseling teachers, such as homeroom teachers, religion teachers, and teachers of other subjects, also carry out the role of school counselors. Unfortunately, most of these teachers do not understand their ability to provide optimal counseling services. Therefore, this research aims to determine the effectiveness of psychoeducation in improving the understanding of non-counseling teachers regarding counseling guidance techniques and services. This quasi-experimental research with a one-group pre-test post-test design was conducted with 38 subjects selected using purposive sampling. The data analysis used the 1-tailed Wilcoxon test with JASP version 0.18.0. The results show that psychoeducation is effective in improving the understanding of counseling techniques and services among non-counseling teachers. The implications of this study can be useful for teachers, policymakers, and future researchers.*

**Keywords:** *Psychoeducation; Techniques and Guidance Counseling Services; Primary Teachers*

## INTRODUCTION

The availability of elementary school counselors is insufficient for the urgency of their presence. Not all Early Childhood and Elementary School (primary) levels have Counseling Guidance teachers or school counselors. In the background of the research, Goodman-Scott, Brown, Berger, and Blalock (2022) found that according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2020) the ratio of school counselors to students for elementary school counselors is around 1:800, while the ratio for middle school counselors is about 1:225. This shows a significant difference between school counselors available at primary versus secondary levels, including in Indonesia showing a high gap. One of the impacts of the low availability of school counselors at the elementary school level in Indonesia is that recently there have been many cases of bullying among elementary school children. The Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FDSI) revealed that as many as 25% of bullying cases occurred at the elementary school level from January to July 2023 (Yulianti, 2023). In fact, school counselors at the primary level (kindergarten and elementary) have a strategic function in developing students' regulatory abilities in learning and socializing (Dina & Farozin, 2020), including encouraging students to increase their learning motivation to achieve their best achievements (Callan, et al., 2022). Thus, the role of school counselor is mostly held by homeroom teachers and teachers who teach subjects, such as religion teachers, and so on.

Unfortunately, the guidance and counseling process at the elementary school level is often ineffective because non-counseling teachers do not understand how to help students develop themselves so they can be optimally involved in learning (Batubara & Ariani, 2018; Tanod, Diswantika, & Iasha, 2019). Non-guidance counseling teachers do not understand what correct counseling techniques are like. Non-guidance counseling teachers have not mastered professional competencies and experience in providing counseling services to students is still lacking and has not been structured according to quality services (Nugroho & Fathoni, 2022). In addition, many non-guidance counseling teachers lack the confidence to encourage students to develop self-regulation skills and effective learning strategies (Hattie & Yates, 2014; Callan & Shim, 2019). The solution is to be able to provide competency support, including how to conduct counseling and understand children's development based on their chronological age, for non-counseling guidance teachers (Nugroho & Fathoni, 2022).

One of the provisions that can be given to non-guidance counseling teachers is psychoeducation. Himpsi (2010) explains that psychoeducation is an activity carried out with the aim of increasing or improving understanding and/or skills. Psychoeducation is often carried out to improve teacher competency, including improving classroom management strategy skills for teachers at the primary level (Hastuti & Sahrani, 2018), sex education for teachers and students as an effort to prevent sexual violence in elementary school students (Masrurroh, Putri, Hidayah, & Faishol, 2022), psychoeducation can improve teachers' attitudes towards children with special needs (Widiastuti & Wijaya, 2022), and so on. However, psychoeducation still needs to be tested for its successful effect on increasing competence to overcome existing problems and ensure that no negative impacts occur (Himpsi, 2010).

To date, researchers have not found the effectiveness of psychoeducation in understanding counseling services for non-counseling elementary school teachers. Thus, the aim of this research is to test the effectiveness of psychoeducation in increasing the understanding of counseling services for primary level non guidance counseling teachers. The hypothesis of this research is that there will be an increase in understanding of counseling services among non-guidance counseling teachers.

## METHODS

This research is cross-sectional research, which means that the data collection process was carried out directly during a certain period. This research also includes quantitative research whose implementation uses a quasi-experimental method with a one-group pre-test-post-test design, where the researcher uses one experimental group without a comparison group. Researchers used non-probability sampling techniques with purposive sampling techniques in selecting research subjects. The researcher chose an available sample according to research needs: non-counseling school teachers who had never taken part in psychoeducation about counseling techniques and services. Based on the G\*power application version 3.1.9.7 with effect size = 0.5,  $\alpha$  err prob = 0.005, and Power (1- $\beta$  err prob) = 0.90, the minimum sample required is 38 to be declared valid in drawing conclusions and meet a reasonable sample size.

In this study, researchers took data twice. First, the researcher wanted to see the initial knowledge of the research subjects before being given psychoeducation about counseling techniques and services for early childhood and elementary school (primary) students. Second, researchers want to see the final knowledge after being given psychoeducation. Psychoeducation is carried out in one day with a duration of eight hours, with a break of one hour. The material presented is related to child development, counseling techniques, and services for children, including journaling and its benefits (mindfulness). Psychoeducation is carried out at one of the foundations that oversee PAUD and SD in the Semarang area. The selection of the implementation location is based on the availability and needs of the subject. Before psychoeducation was carried out, the researcher looked at the results of the needs analysis carried out by the research team.

The instrument used, first is knowledge evaluation with multiple choice format a, b, c, and d. Examples of knowledge evaluation items are "*Tahapan dalam konseling, kecuali...*", and "*Yang bukan termasuk komponen mendengar aktif dari apa yang dijelaskan adalah...*". The second is a reaction evaluation using a Likert scale format of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Examples of reaction evaluation items are "*materi yang disampaikan mudah dipahami*", and "*materi yang disampaikan bermanfaat untuk saya*". The evaluation of knowledge and reactions is structured based on Kirkpatrick's (1998) evaluation framework. The instrument was validated by Sri Malahayati, S.Psi., M.M., as ICF Associate Certified Coach who also understands the ins and outs of counseling techniques and services.

In the data processing process, researchers used the JASP tool version 0.18.0. Researchers used descriptive statistics to see the description of the research subjects and processed quantitative data using the non-parametric Wilcoxon test to answer the research hypothesis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, there were 38 subjects, with 37 women and 1 man. Apart from that, subject's final education, 30 of the teachers' last education was Bachelor's, 6 teachers' last education was SMA/SMK equivalent (who are currently continuing to Bachelor's level), and 2 teachers' last education was Post-Graduate, both profession or master's degree. Based on the demographic data, most subjects are women with a bachelor's degree. All subjects did not come from a Guidance and Counseling Education background and had never received psychoeducation about counseling techniques and guidance services before.

The next step, the researcher carried out a Wilcoxon hypothesis test to see the effectiveness of the psychoeducation that had been given to the subject. The requirements for the Wilcoxon test are that the data does not have to be normally distributed and can be carried out on data from less than 60 subjects. The Wilcoxon test results is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Wilcoxon Test Analysis

	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Knowledge Evaluation	5,00	<0,01

The results show that there is an increase in knowledge evaluation between before and after providing psychoeducation regarding counseling techniques and guidance services. What this means is that psychoeducation has an impact on subjects becoming more aware of the counseling techniques and services that can be provided to kindergarten and elementary school students based on their stage of development. Then, researchers also saw that the average evaluation of reactions to satisfaction with psychoeducation that took place was 5.32 on a 6 Likert scale. These results show that the majority felt satisfied and showed positive reactions with the psychoeducation provided.

The findings in this research prove that psychoeducation is effective in increasing non-guidance counseling teachers' understanding of counseling techniques and services. This finding means that it confirms previous research by Nugroho and Fathoni (2022), that non guidance counseling teachers need support, both in the form of psychoeducation and training, to be able to understand the counseling techniques and services that can be provided to students. Knight (2015) also stated that every teacher who becomes a primary level counselor needs ongoing training and psychoeducation to develop abilities and face future challenges. Primary level teachers who also act as school counselors have a significant role in helping students overcome problematic academic grades and poor learning attitudes (Domina, Akos, Bastian, & Godwin, 2022).

The findings of this research suggest that several important things that need to be mastered by non-guidance counseling teachers at the primary level are counseling techniques and services, including the steps for conducting counseling, competencies that need to be developed in counseling such as active listening and empathy, as well as appropriate child development stages. chronological age. By studying these core things, it is hoped that non-guidance counseling teachers can understand and help students overcome problems related to academic, social, and emotional matters, including preventing bullying behavior.

Even though psychoeducation regarding counseling techniques and guidance services provided to non-counseling teachers is effective in supporting students' learning processes and overcoming problematic behavior at the primary level, researchers assess that the presence of counselors in primary level schools is still irreplaceable. Psychoeducation cannot replace skills learned continuously over a long period of time. According to ASCA (2019), one of the most important duties of a school counselor is to implement a comprehensive school counseling program to facilitate the development of academic services, career guidance, and social and emotional issues. Non-counseling teachers do not have the same counseling skills as school counselors. In addition, school counselors are also tasked with being able to communicate clearly with all stakeholders and advocate for their roles and services (Fye, Miller, & Rainey, 2018). Thus, the results of this research can be input for policymakers to provide school counselors at the primary level (kindergarten and elementary school).

Looking the positive impact of psychoeducation on increasing understanding of counseling techniques and guidance services for non-guidance counseling teachers, Future research can investigate the impact of providing psychoeducation and continuous supervision to non-guidance counseling teachers on increasing their self-efficacy in providing counseling services to students. As stated by Tang (2020), consistent mentoring will increase teacher efficacy in providing counseling services in a short period of time.

Another thing to note is that in this study, the minimum number of subjects was at 90% power, so there is still a 10% chance that the results will be invalid. Even though in social research, 90% power is still acceptable, it is hoped that future research can increase the minimum sample size which is at 95% power. Increased power will increase the validation of the conclusions obtained.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that providing psychoeducational materials on counseling techniques and services was effective in enhancing the understanding of counseling among non-guidance counseling teachers at the primary level. The findings of this research can be utilized by teachers who do not specialize in guidance counseling to enhance their knowledge of counseling techniques and services, which could help them to support and foster their students' academic, social, and emotional development. Policymakers can also use these findings to provide self-improvement opportunities for primary level teachers to enhance the quality of counseling services, such as psychoeducation, sharing best practices, and continuous training and supervision. Finally, future research could involve larger sample sizes to achieve more robust results.

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