

TRANSFORMATION OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

The transformation of counselor education in the digital era is a response to significant changes in the world of education influenced by advances in information and communication technology. These changes require counselors to adapt in order to remain relevant in providing effective guidance and counseling services to students. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. Data sources were taken through interviews conducted directly in the field. To strengthen the research data, the author also took data through observation and documentation. Then all interview data were analyzed by means of data collection, reduction, presentation and drawing conclusions. The results of the analysis show that the transformation of counselor education in the digital era requires a paradigm shift in the approach and implementation of counseling services. Counselors are required to be adaptive, creative, and innovative professionals in utilizing technology to improve the quality of counseling services. Thus, counselors can play an optimal role in supporting the development of students in this digital era

Keywords: Transformation of Counselor Education, Digital Era

1. Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in various sectors of life, including education. One of the professions affected is the educational counselor, who has played an important role in providing guidance and counseling services to students. The entry of the digital era requires counselors to adapt to these changes in order to remain relevant and effective in carrying out their duties. (Halqim, 2024)

The digital era is characterized by technological advances such as the internet, social media, and other digital devices that affect patterns of communication and human interaction. In the context of education, this has an impact on the way counselors provide services to students. Guidance and counseling services that were previously conducted face-to-face are now starting to shift to digital platforms, such as online counseling through video calls, chats, or special applications. This change not only affects the method of service delivery, but also requires counselors to have adequate digital skills. (Gading, 2020)

Counselors in the digital era are required to master various skills, ranging from technical skills in using digital devices to interpersonal skills in communicating online. In addition, counselors must also understand the ethics and code of conduct in providing services through digital media, and be able to maintain confidentiality and privacy of counselees even through online platforms. This is a challenge in itself, given that not all counselors have a background or training in information technology. (Fahriza et al., 2023) This transformation also has an impact on the counselor education curriculum. Universities that run guidance and counseling study programs need to make adjustments to the existing curriculum, by including materials related to information technology, online counseling, and digital ethics. In addition, training and workshops for practicing counselors are also

needed to improve their competence in facing challenges in the digital era. (Deroncele-Acosta et al., 2023)

In addition to the technical aspects, these changes also affect the paradigm in guidance and counseling services. In the past, counseling services were more conventional and limited to direct interaction between counselors and counsees. Now, with digital technology, counseling services can be done anytime and anywhere, providing flexibility for counsees to access services according to their needs. However, this also requires counselors to be more creative and innovative in delivering materials and conducting interventions, so that they remain effective even though they are conducted online. (Annuur et al., 2024)

In addition, another challenge that arises is the issue of accessibility. Not all learners have equal access to digital technology, both in terms of devices and internet connections. This can lead to gaps in getting guidance and counseling services. Therefore, counselors need to have strategies to reach learners who have limited access, for example by providing services through various platforms or methods that can be accessed by all learners. (Chintyasari, 2025)

In facing these challenges, collaboration between various parties is very important. The government, educational institutions, and communities need to work together to create an ecosystem that supports the transformation of counselor education in the digital era. The government can provide supportive policies and regulations, educational institutions can provide the necessary training and facilities, while the community can provide support and participation in this transformation process. (Yulianti et al., 2024)

Overall, the transformation of counselor education in the digital era is a necessity that must be faced with readiness and openness to change. With adaptation and innovation, counselors can continue to carry out their role effectively and make a maximum contribution in supporting the development of students in this digital era. (Saputra et al., 2022)

2. Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method because this research aims to find out about the transformation of counselor education in the digital era.

This research uses data collection techniques. (Juliansyah Noor, 2016)

a. Observation

It is a data collection technique that is carried out systematically and deliberately through observation and recording of the symptoms being investigated

b. Interview

An interview is a meeting of two people to exchange information and ideas through questions and answers so that meaning can be constructed on a particular topic. Interviews are used as a data collection technique if you want to conduct a preliminary study to find problems that must be researched, but also if you want to know things from respondents that are more in-depth. In this research, the type of interview used by researchers is a structured interview. This interview is also called a controlled interview, which means that the entire interview is based on a predetermined system or list of questions. (Juliansyah Noor, 2016)

c. Documentation

Is the search and acquisition of the necessary data through data that is already available, the documentation technique is used with the intention of complementing the results of the data obtained through observation and interview techniques that have been carried out previously. (Apriyanti et al., 2019)

This research uses triangulation techniques in testing the validity of the data. triangulation is a multi-method approach taken by researchers when collecting and analyzing data. Then related to data checking, triangulation means a data validity checking technique carried out by utilizing other things (data) that are used for checking and comparing data in the form of sources, methods.

In this research, the data validity tests used are source triangulation, method triangulation and time triangulation. (Hadi, 2016)

1) Source Triangulation

Source triangulation is comparing and rechecking the degree of trust in information obtained through different sources. Such as comparing the results of observations with the results of interviews and comparing what people say in public with what is said in private and comparing the results of interviews with existing methods. (Muhammad et al., 2011)

2) Triangulation of Methods

Triangulation of methods is an attempt to check the validity of data or check the validity of research findings. In triangulation methods can be done by using more than one data collection technique to get. (Bachri, 2010b)

3) Time Triangulation

Often affects the credibility of the data, for that in order to test the credibility of the data can be done by checking with observation, interviewing the same data, which can be observation, documentation, and interviews. (Bachri, 2010a)

Data analysis techniques in qualitative research for Miles and Huberman include the following. (Malik et al., 2020)

a) Reduction

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data that occurs in written field notes. Data reduction is interpreted as a process of selecting and simplifying data related to research interests only, abstraction and transformation of rough data from field notes

b) Display

Data presentation is a set of information that provides the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action. The presentation of data in this research is a description of understanding building student character through understanding the transformation of counselor education in the digital era

c) Draw Conclusions

It is a complete configuration activity, after the analysis is carried out, the research results

will be concluded by the author. From the results of processing and analyzing the data, an interpretation of the problem is then given which ultimately serves as the basis for drawing conclusions. (Malik et al., 2020)

3. Results and Discussion

The transformation of counselor education in the digital era is a response to significant changes in the world of education influenced by advances in information and communication technology. These changes require counselors to adapt to remain relevant in providing effective guidance and counseling services to students.(Choiri et al., 2024)

The digital era has had a profound impact on various aspects of life, including education. In this context, counselors are required to master information and communication technology to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services. However, the low level of digital literacy among counselors is a major challenge that must be addressed through continuous training and professional development.(Pohan et al., 2024)

One significant form of transformation is the shift from conventional counseling services to technology-based counseling services, such as e-counseling. This service allows counselors to reach learners without geographical and time constraints, thus increasing the accessibility of counseling services. However, the implementation of e- counseling also presents challenges, such as the need for adequate technological infrastructure and an understanding of ethics in the use of technology. (Chintyasari, 2025)

In addition, technological developments also encourage counselors to develop new approaches in counseling services, such as digital-based narrative counseling. This approach utilizes digital media to help learners reflect on and change their personal narratives, thus improving their psychological well-being.(Sari et al., 2024)

In order to face the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities, counselors need to have adequate digital competencies. These competencies include the ability to use information and communication technology in the context of counseling services, as well as an understanding of the ethical and privacy issues associated with the use of technology. Improving digital competence can be done through continuous training and professional development. (Wati & Savira, 2024)

Overall, the transformation of counselor education in the digital era requires a paradigm shift in the approach and implementation of counseling services. Counselors are required to be adaptive, creative, and innovative professionals in utilizing technology to improve the quality of counseling services. Thus, counselors can play an optimal role in supporting the development of students in this digital era.(Situmorang et al., 2024)

4. Conclusions

The transformation of counselor education in the digital era is a fundamental process of change that involves adjusting the curriculum, learning methods, and developing the digital competencies of prospective counselors so that they are able to respond to the needs of the times. In this context, counselor education does not only focus on strengthening psychological and pedagogical aspects, but must also be able to integrate digital technology into the learning process and counseling practice. The digital era presents new challenges and opportunities such as the emergence of online counseling platforms, the use of artificial intelligence, and the use of social media as a means of communication and psychological intervention

Therefore, educators and institutions providing counselor education are required to be adaptive and innovative in compiling relevant curricula, developing technology-based learning tools, and training prospective counselors to have adequate digital literacy. In addition, this transformation also demands a strong professional ethic in dealing with new issues related to data privacy, digital security, and the authenticity of virtual interactions. Thus, the transformation of

counselor education in the digital era is not only about the application of technology, but also about a paradigm shift in viewing the counseling process itself, making it more inclusive, flexible, and responsive to the dynamics of modern society.

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