

## THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS IN ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES CAUSED BY SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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### Abstract

This qualitative descriptive study examines the role of guidance counselors in addressing mental health issues caused by social media trends among Indonesian adolescents. Through comprehensive literature review, the research identifies key patterns in how social media affects adolescent psychological wellbeing, including increased anxiety, depression, and negative self-perception resulting from exposure to unrealistic standards, social comparison, and digital peer pressure. The study explores the evolving responsibilities of guidance counselors as they navigate this complex intersection of technology and adolescent development, highlighting effective intervention strategies such as cognitive-behavioral approaches, peer mentorship initiatives, and family-based programs. Findings reveal the importance of collaborative frameworks that position counselors as coordinators within broader support networks involving teachers, parents, mental health professionals, and community resources. The research emphasizes the necessity of culturally responsive practices that integrate universal psychological principles with Indonesian cultural contexts, including religious perspectives and socioeconomic considerations. Despite challenges including high counselor-to-student ratios and limited specialized training, innovative practices are emerging that leverage existing resources and cultural strengths. The study concludes that strengthening guidance counselors' capacity through professional development, institutional support, and policy frameworks is essential for effectively addressing the mental health impacts of social media on Indonesian adolescents.

**Keywords:** guidance counseling; adolescent mental health; social media trends; digital literacy; culturally responsive intervention

### 1. Introduction

In the digital age, social media has become an integral part of adolescents' daily lives, fundamentally transforming how they communicate, form relationships, and perceive themselves and the world around them. While these platforms provide unprecedented opportunities for connection and self-expression, they simultaneously present significant challenges to adolescent mental health. The rapid evolution of social media trends from viral challenges to beauty standards to social comparison has created a complex landscape that many young people struggle to navigate healthily. (Widodo, 2023). Recent studies indicate a concerning correlation between increased social media usage and rising rates of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem among adolescents. In Indonesia, where smartphone penetration has reached over 70% of the population with particularly high usage among teenagers, guidance counselors in schools face mounting pressure to address these emerging mental health challenges. As frontline mental health advocates within educational settings, these professionals stand at a critical intersection between digital culture and adolescent wellbeing. This research examines the vital role of guidance counselors in identifying, addressing, and mitigating mental health issues stemming from social media trends among Indonesian adolescents. Through a qualitative descriptive approach based on literature review, this study explores effective strategies, interventions, and collaborative approaches that enable counselors to

support students in developing healthier relationships with social media while promoting positive mental health outcomes. (Anderson, 2022)

The significance of this research lies in its timeliness and relevance to contemporary educational challenges. As the digital landscape continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace, equipping guidance counselors with evidence-based approaches to address social media-related mental health issues becomes increasingly crucial for safeguarding adolescent wellbeing and academic success. (Twenge, 2023)

## 2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach through comprehensive literature review to explore the role of guidance counselors in addressing mental health issues caused by social media trends among adolescents. The qualitative descriptive method was selected for its appropriateness in examining complex social phenomena and providing rich, detailed descriptions of the subject matter without imposing preconceived theoretical frameworks. This approach allows for the synthesis of diverse perspectives and findings from existing literature while maintaining contextual relevance to the Indonesian educational setting.

The literature review process followed a systematic protocol beginning with the identification of relevant search terms including "guidance counseling," "mental health," "social media trends," "adolescents," "Indonesia," and their variations in both English and Bahasa Indonesia. These terms were used to search multiple academic databases including ERIC, PsycINFO, Google Scholar, Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital), and the Indonesian Scientific Journal Database (ISJD). The search focused on peer-reviewed articles, books, conference proceedings, and institutional reports published within the last five years (2019-2024) to ensure currency and relevance, though seminal works from earlier periods were included when appropriate for foundational concepts.

Selection criteria for inclusion in the review prioritized studies that specifically addressed the intersection of guidance counseling practices, adolescent mental health, and social media influence, with particular attention to research conducted in Indonesian contexts or with demonstrable applicability to Indonesian educational settings. Documents were evaluated for methodological rigor, relevance to the research questions, and contribution to understanding the multifaceted role of guidance counselors. A total of 47 sources met the inclusion criteria and were subsequently analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify patterns, concepts, and emerging approaches in addressing social media-related mental health challenges. (Setiawan, 2024)

The analysis process involved iterative reading and coding of selected literature to identify recurring themes, intervention strategies, theoretical frameworks, and contextual factors influencing guidance counseling practices related to social media and mental health. Special attention was given to culturally responsive approaches that recognize Indonesia's diverse sociocultural landscape and its influence on both adolescent social media engagement and mental health support systems. The coding framework was developed inductively from the literature while maintaining alignment with the research objectives of understanding counselors' roles, challenges, and effective strategies. Limitations of this methodological approach include the absence of primary empirical data collection and potential gaps in available literature specifically addressing the Indonesian context. These limitations were mitigated through triangulation of sources across different research traditions and careful consideration of transferability when drawing from international studies. The

descriptive qualitative approach provides a foundation for future empirical research while offering timely insights into an emerging area of educational and mental health concern

### 3. Results and Discussion

**Social Media Trends and Their Impact on Adolescent Mental Health** The analysis of literature reveals a consistent pattern of concerning psychological impacts associated with various social media trends among adolescents. Recent studies from Indonesia indicate that teenagers spend an average of 6-7 hours daily on social media platforms, with Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube being the most frequently accessed. This extensive engagement exposes adolescents to numerous potentially harmful trends including appearance-focused content, social comparison opportunities, and viral challenges that often promote unrealistic standards. Research by Widodo and Handayani documents how appearance-focused content on Instagram correlates with increased body dissatisfaction among Indonesian female adolescents aged 13-17, with 68% of participants reporting feelings of inadequacy after viewing filtered images of peers and influencers. Similarly, the phenomenon of "fear of missing out" (FOMO) has been identified as a significant stressor, with Kusuma's study of 430 Indonesian high school students finding that 74% experienced moderate to severe anxiety related to perceived social exclusion observed through social media.

"The psychological impact of these trends is particularly pronounced during the critical developmental period of adolescence, when identity formation and peer acceptance are paramount concerns," notes Purnama in her analysis of digital media effects on youth development. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the algorithms that power social media platforms, which tend to amplify extreme content and create echo chambers that normalize potentially harmful behaviors and attitudes. *The Evolving Role of Guidance Counselors in the Digital Age* (Kusuma, 2024)

Traditional models of school counseling in Indonesia have primarily focused on academic guidance and career development, with less emphasis on mental health support. However, the emergence of social media-related psychological challenges has necessitated a significant evolution in the scope and approach of guidance counselors' work. Current literature suggests an expanding role that encompasses digital literacy education, psychological first aid, and collaborative intervention strategies. (Purnama, 2022)

Guidance counselors are increasingly positioned as "digital mentors" who help students develop critical media literacy skills. As Pratiwi and colleagues argue, "The most effective intervention is not restriction but education teaching adolescents to critically evaluate digital content and understand the mechanisms that social media platforms use to capture and maintain attention. This expanded role requires counselors to continually update their own knowledge of digital trends and technologies while developing culturally responsive approaches to digital citizenship education. (Kartadinata, 2021)

International comparative studies suggest that Indonesian guidance counselors face unique challenges including higher student-to-counselor ratios (often exceeding 1:500) compared to the recommended 1:250 ratio, limited specialized training in digital media psychology, and varying levels of institutional support. Despite these challenges, innovative practices are emerging from within the Indonesian guidance counseling community, with particular emphasis on integrating local cultural values with contemporary psychological approaches. (Hartono, 2023)

Effective Intervention Strategies and Programs Analysis of successful intervention models reveals several promising approaches for guidance counselors addressing social media-related mental health issues. Group-based cognitive-behavioral interventions have shown particular efficacy in helping adolescents recognize and modify problematic thinking patterns related to social comparison and self-evaluation. A pilot program implemented in 12 Jakarta secondary schools found that participants in an 8-week counselor-led CBT group focusing on social media habits showed significant improvements in self-esteem measures and reduced anxiety symptoms compared to control groups. (Suryana, 2023)

Peer mentorship programs guided by trained counselors represent another effective approach. Suryani's ethnographic study of a peer support initiative in Bandung documented how student "digital ambassadors" trained by guidance counselors were able to effectively reach peers who might otherwise avoid formal counseling services. This approach leverages adolescents' natural reliance on peer influence while providing structured support and oversight. Family-based interventions that include parent education components have also demonstrated promising results. As Widjaja notes, "The most effective approaches recognize that adolescent social media use occurs within a family system, and meaningful change requires parental involvement and understanding." Guidance counselors who implement parent workshops on digital wellbeing report numbered and centered. (Mulyana, 2022)

The literature emphasizes the importance of adapting approaches to Indonesia's diverse cultural context. Western-developed intervention models require thoughtful modification to align with local values and practices. As Mulyana argues, "Effective counseling approaches must integrate universal psychological principles with understanding of local cultural norms regarding emotional expression, family dynamics, and help-seeking behaviors." Religion and spirituality emerge as particularly important contextual factors in the Indonesian setting. Research by Ibrahim and Djalante found that incorporating faith-based perspectives into counseling approaches significantly increased engagement among both students and parents in predominantly Muslim communities. Successful guidance counselors described integrating religious teachings about moderation and intentionality with contemporary psychological approaches to promote balanced social media use. Socioeconomic factors also influence both the nature of social media engagement and access to mental health support. Urban adolescents typically have greater access to various platforms and face different challenges compared to rural students, requiring counselors to tailor approaches based on community context. This suggests the need for flexible intervention frameworks that can be adapted to diverse settings while maintaining core evidence-based principles. (Ahmadi, 2023)

## Conclusions

This research highlights the critical and evolving role of guidance counselors in addressing adolescent mental health challenges stemming from social media trends in Indonesia. As the digital landscape continues to transform adolescent social experiences, guidance counselors have emerged as essential frontline responders who must balance traditional counseling approaches with innovative strategies tailored to the digital context.

Provide acknowledgements accordingly. List here those individuals or institutions who gave help, assistance during the research (e.g., providing grants, laboratory facility, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.). In case of the grants, please provide the number and year of the grant received. The findings emphasize that effective intervention requires a multifaceted approach that extends beyond individual counseling sessions. Successful guidance counselors are increasingly adopting roles as digital literacy educators, coordinators of collaborative support networks, and culturally responsive practitioners who can adapt evidence-based approaches to Indonesia's diverse social contexts. The integration of cognitive-behavioral techniques, peer mentorship programs, and family-based interventions has shown particular promise in helping adolescents develop healthier relationships with social media.

This study also underscores significant challenges facing guidance counselors in Indonesia, including high student-to-counselor ratios, limited specialized training in digital mental health, and varying levels of institutional support. Despite these constraints, innovative practices are emerging that leverage existing resources and cultural strengths to support adolescent wellbeing. The adaptation of counseling approaches to incorporate religious perspectives, local cultural values, and community partnerships demonstrates the importance of contextually responsive practice. Moving forward, strengthening the capacity of guidance counselors to address social media-related mental health issues will require systematic attention to professional development, institutional support structures, and policy frameworks. Schools and educational authorities should prioritize reducing counselor caseloads, providing specialized training in digital mental health, and facilitating collaborative networks that extend beyond school boundaries. Further research is needed to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of various intervention approaches and to develop culturally validated assessment tools for identifying at-risk students.

The rapidly evolving nature of social media platforms and trends necessitates an adaptive, responsive approach to guidance counseling that can anticipate and address emerging challenges. By positioning guidance counselors as knowledgeable, equipped, and supported professionals, Indonesia's educational system can more effectively protect and promote adolescent mental health in the digital age. This investment in counselor capacity ultimately represents an investment in the psychological wellbeing and future potential of Indonesia's youth

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