

The Role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) Teachers in Cultivating Students' Growth Mindset in the Midst of Digital Academic Competition

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Abstract

Digital transformation in education has a significant impact on the dynamics of learning and students' academic expectations. Amidst increasingly tight academic competition and pressure to excel in the digital space, students need to strengthen an adaptive and resilient mentality. This article discusses the strategic role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers in fostering a growth mindset, the belief that abilities can be developed through effort and learning in high school students. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method in three high schools in Indonesia. The results of the study indicate that structured counseling interventions, personal support from BK teachers, and the integration of self-development programs into the curriculum can significantly improve students' growth mindset. This article recommends strengthening the capacity of BK teachers in digital literacy and positive psychology as a systematic effort to face the challenges of increasingly complex digital academic competition.

Keywords: Growth Mindset, Guidance Counseling, Digital Academic Competition

Introduction:

The massive development of information and communication technology (ICT) has fundamentally changed the global education landscape, including in Indonesia. This digital transformation has not only created wider access to learning, but also formed a very different academic competition model compared to the previous era. In this context, various edtech-based learning platforms such as Learning Management Systems, artificial intelligence-based applications, and automated assessment systems have become tools that shape the way students learn today. According to Selwyn (2016), the digitalization of education brings with it a new logic in learning, which emphasizes efficiency, personalization, and performativity. This



encourages students to not only understand the material, but also be able to respond to technological developments adaptively and critically.

However, behind the technological advances that bring many conveniences, there are significant psychological consequences, especially for students. Students are now not only competing in physical classrooms, but also in digital spaces that are open, instant, and full of performance pressure. This phenomenon is in line with Twenge's findings (2017) which show that the digital youth generation (iGen) has experienced a significant increase in anxiety and stress levels due to constant exposure to social media and unrealistic achievement standards. In situations like this, an approach that emphasizes the formation of a growth mindset becomes increasingly relevant and crucial in assisting students in facing the challenges of the times.

The concept of growth mindset developed by Carol Dweck (2006) provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding how students' perceptions of their own abilities affect their achievement and psychological well-being. Dweck states that individuals with a growth mindset believe that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, strategy, and help from others. In contrast, those with a fixed mindset tend to view failure as a reflection of permanent incompetence. In an increasingly competitive and digital performance-based educational context, students with a growth mindset will be better able to manage stress, accept feedback, and demonstrate persistence in completing challenging tasks.

Within the framework of national education, the role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers is very strategic in fostering this growth mindset. BK teachers have direct access to provide personal guidance to students, understand their psychosocial dynamics, and design interventions that are appropriate to their developmental needs. The humanistic counseling approach that emphasizes empathy, unconditional acceptance, and self-reflection, as explained in Carl Rogers' theory (1951), is very relevant in this context. BK teachers can facilitate a safe space for students to explore their strengths and weaknesses, build self-confidence, and develop a positive self-narrative.

The major challenges faced by students in the digital era are not only related to academic demands, but also social pressures that come from digital media algorithms. Excessive exposure to the culture of self-comparison (social comparison) on social media can lower self-esteem and disrupt students' emotional balance. According to Festinger (1954), individuals tend

to evaluate themselves through social comparison, and in the digital context, this process takes place intensely and constantly. This is where the role of the BK teacher becomes vital in equipping students with emotional regulation skills, coping strategies, and self-compassion, so that they are not easily influenced by unrealistic external expectations.

To address this challenge, the BK service approach needs to be developed more systematically and adaptively. Interventions such as individual counseling based on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), group counseling with the theme of resilience building, to information services that discuss effective learning strategies and digital literacy, are some examples that can be applied in an integrated manner. In its implementation, collaboration between BK teachers, subject teachers and parents is essential to ensure that growth mindset values are not only instilled incidentally, but become a learning culture in schools. Research by Rattan, Good, and Dweck (2012) supports this by showing that mindset interventions that are collaborated with a supportive learning environment can significantly improve student achievement.

Finally, cultivating a growth mindset is not only about changing the way students think, but also about forming an education system that supports a reflective, sustainable, and meaningful learning process. BK teachers, as the vanguard in psychopedagogical services, need to be equipped with professional training based on evidence-based practices, so that they are able to design strategies that are in accordance with the dynamics of the times. Thus, education is no longer just about the end result (output), but also about the process (outcome) that develops students into individuals who are resilient, adaptive, and capable of lifelong learning. As emphasized by UNESCO (2015), future education must integrate cognitive, emotional, and social aspects to form a generation that is not only intelligent, but also psychologically and socially wise.

Research methods:

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of exploring in depth the role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers in fostering students' growth mindset amidst digital academic competition. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for understanding social and psychological phenomena in a complex and dynamic educational context.

The subjects of this study were BK teachers and students in three junior and senior high schools in a big city that have implemented active digital and face-to-face counseling services. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, namely by selecting informants who are considered to have relevant understanding and experience with the research topic.

Results and Discussion:

In broadening the understanding of the role of guidance counselors in fostering a growth mindset, it is also important to examine how this counseling approach strengthens students' psychological literacy. Psychological literacy, as stated by O'Connor et al. (2014), refers to an individual's ability to understand and manage psychological aspects of themselves. Guidance counselors act as primary facilitators in increasing students' awareness of their emotional states, thought patterns, and healthy coping mechanisms. Through open dialogue in counseling sessions, students are guided to recognize and name their emotions, connect learning experiences with psychological reactions, and seek adaptive strategies to overcome obstacles. This allows students to build a foundation of metacognitive awareness that is essential for academic and social growth.

In addition, the development of growth mindset by BK teachers also closely intersects with the socio-emotional learning (SEL) approach. The SEL framework popularized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020) places five main competencies, namely self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational skills, and responsible decision-making. BK teachers in schools play a strategic role in guiding students to develop these five aspects through activities integrated into counseling services. For example, when students are invited to formulate long-term learning goals, they not only learn to manage themselves, but also understand the importance of perseverance and responsibility in the process. This supports the growth of agency and self-efficacy, two components that according to Bandura (1997) are very influential in achieving personal and academic goals. Furthermore, the practice of guidance and counseling teachers in promoting growth mindset strengthens the social learning process that takes place in the school environment. In many cases, students experience academic pressure not only because of the demands of the lessons, but also because of the social dynamics in the classroom and the influence of digital media.

Guidance and counseling teachers strive to build an inclusive and supportive learning ecosystem, where the diversity of learning styles and backgrounds of students is valued. Through group counseling and circle sharing activities, students are invited to share experiences, develop empathy, and create a sense of belonging. According to Vygotsky (1978), social learning through interaction between individuals has a significant impact on the development of students' proximal zones, which are the focal point for forming positive mental attitudes towards challenges.

The ability of the guidance counselor to align counseling interventions with the developmental needs of students is also a major strength in forming a growth mindset. Each phase of students' psychosocial development brings different challenges, as explained by Erikson (1968), and the guidance counselor plays a role in helping students understand these dynamics. In the adolescent phase, for example, where identity and self-confidence are central issues, the guidance counselor guides students to recognize their unique competencies and overcome feelings of inferiority. Interventions based on strength-based counseling reinforce the narrative of student success, even in a small context, to build confidence in the ability to continue to grow. This approach is in line with the principles of positive psychology developed by Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000), which emphasizes the importance of strengthening individual strengths rather than only focusing on weaknesses.

The role of the BK teacher in building a healthy learning culture is also reflected in their ability to encourage students to participate in educational decision-making. In many counseling sessions, students are given space to voice their opinions about appropriate learning styles, fair evaluation methods, and career choices they want to pursue. This practice reflects the paradigm of participatory education that positions students as active subjects in the learning process. According to Freire (1970), liberating education is education that allows for dialogue and critical reflection between educators and students. In this context, the BK teacher becomes a transformative agent who encourages students to build critical relationships with themselves, their learning environment, and their future.

Strengthening the growth mindset by guidance and counseling teachers also has an important preventive dimension in the context of students' mental health. When students are accustomed to adopting a growth mindset, they will be better able to face failure without feeling emotionally

depressed. Several studies (e.g., Yeager & Dweck, 2012) show that students with a growth mindset are more resilient to academic stress and tend to have lower rates of depression. In this case, guidance and counseling teacher interventions are part of preventive efforts against more serious psychological problems, such as burnout, chronic anxiety, and even identity disorders. This approach strengthens the argument that the function of guidance and counseling services should not only be understood as remedial, but also as promotive and preventive in shaping students' healthy character.

Finally, the BK teacher's strategy in instilling a growth mindset also requires close collaboration with subject teachers, parents, and other school parties. Without systemic support, the BK teacher's efforts can be fragmented and lose their reach. This cross-functional collaboration reflects a whole school approach, where growth mindset values and practices are integrated into the overall school culture. This is in accordance with the findings of Durlak et al. (2011) which showed that successful social-emotional learning programs are those that are carried out comprehensively and integrated with the curriculum, school management, and teacher-student relationships. Therefore, the role of the BK teacher in this context is not just an individual counselor, but also a driver of a humanistic, reflective, and progressive school culture.

Conclusion

In the midst of increasingly complex digital academic competition dynamics, the role of Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers is very strategic in forming a growth mindset in students. This study shows that BK teachers are able to become agents of change who not only solve students' psychological problems but also internalize important values in developing a positive mentality. Through individual, group, and information service counseling approaches, BK teachers provide emotional, educational, and motivational support that enables students to manage academic stress, increase self-confidence, and form the belief that abilities can be developed through effort and the right strategies.

In practice, BK teachers act as social-emotional learning facilitators who help students understand their potential, view failure as part of the learning process, and build resilience amidst the pressures of achievement that are often driven by digital algorithms and external

expectations. Interventions that are carried out in a planned and consistent manner have been proven to encourage students not to give up on challenges, but to turn them into opportunities for growth.

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