DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract - Mental health is a psychological state that shows someone’s ability to make adjustments or solving problems that exist within themselves (internal) and problems that exist in the environment (external). Mental health issues in colleges/universities, especially in students’ lives are very important to be studied, considering the student’s life on college is far more complex and more vulnerable to mental health problems. One of the problems faced by students on college is adjusting themselves into a new environment and adjusting themselves to new peers. Students’ ability to adapt is varied. Some are easy to adjust to their new environment, especially with their peers, so that they have no difficulty in socializing and meeting their needs. However, some others are unable to adjust to their peers, so that they have difficulty in socializing, meeting their needs, and resulting in the emergence of academic problems. Lecturers as educators and mentors have an important role in helping and directing the students in overcoming their difficulties, especially in terms of adjustment, so that they are able to adapt and complete their tasks optimally. Many strategies can be carried out in an effort to help and improve students' self-adjustment abilities so that they are not exposed to mental health problems, such as despair, moodiness, inferiority, pessimism, or skepticism by optimizing the role of lecturers as educators and academic advisers on college.

Keywords: Student Mental Health Counseling

1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health is one of the fields of study in psychology. In the context of educational psychology, mental health concepts can also be applied in the fields of education, teaching, and counseling. Mental health in the field of education can be applied to the components that exist in the education system in the school/university environment, namely the principal, staff, lecturers, and of course the students. In this
context, the existence of mental health in the components of the educational system in the college or university environment is very necessary so that the education and learning process runs smoothly and produces optimal quality.

Mental health is very essential for every individual human being, even more important than physical health. If someone is mentally healthy, other aspects of his/her life will work optimally. A healthy mental state cannot be separated from good physical health conditions.

Good mental health for individuals is a condition where individuals are free from all types of mental disorders and conditions in which individuals can function normally in carrying out their lives in adjusting to problems that may be encountered throughout their lives. According to World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is a condition of well-being in proven by possessing the natural abilities to manage stress, to work productively, and to participate in their community.¹

Based on the opinions of the experts, it can be concluded that mental health is a state where an individual is protected from the symptoms of a mental or physical illness or disorder. A mentally healthy individual will be able to do social interaction well, live happily, able to adapt, can make decisions, be responsible, and fully functioning.²

Today, more than 450 million of the world's population is having mental disorders. Based on the data from WHO regarding the mental health disorders, 12% of the world population suffered the mental health disorder in 2000. In 2001, the number increased to 13%. In 2002, the survey results showed that 154 million people were depressed and 25 million suffered epilepsy, and around 877,000 people die from suicide each year. It was predicted that the number would increase by 15% in 2015. The prevalence of developing countries is higher.

The Indonesian Pediatrician Association states that the number of adolescents is 29% of the total world population and most of them (80%) live in developing countries. The number of teenagers between the age of 10 to 19 in Indonesia reaches 41 million³ approximately 20% of the total population (Central Statistics Agency / BPS)⁴. Then, in 2014 The Central Statistics Agency recorded an increase in the

¹ Adisty Wismani Putri et.al, Kesehatan Mental dalam Masyarakat Indonesia (Pengetahuan, dan keterbukaan Masyarakat terhadap gangguan kesehatan Mental) Jurnal Prosiding KS. RISESET & PKM Vol. 2 No. 2 in 2018 P. 252.
⁴Badan Pusat Statistik (2010), BPS: Sensus Pendudukan 2010 Jakarta: BPS.
population in Indonesia to 252.04 million and as many as 61.33 million or around 24.53% were teenagers.\textsuperscript{5}

Basic Health Research done by Indonesian Ministry of Health (2015) noted that in 2013 there was 6\% of the mental-emotional disorders (symptoms of depression and anxiety) suffered by adolescents aged 15 years and over.\textsuperscript{6} The National Alliance on Mental Illness\textsuperscript{7} explains that 50\% of permanent mental health problems start from the age of 14 and above. Frydenberg (Aherman et al. 2010, quoted from Qonita Ali Usmi Karyani)\textsuperscript{8} notes from previous research, the main factor of the causes of mental health problems in adolescents is the success in school, friendship and family relationships, and social problems such as environment, poverty, and unemployment.

Students as part of the adolescent community cannot be separated from the problems that occur in the psychological development process which if not resolved properly can cause mental health problems. These problems can emerge internally or externally. The students’ mental health problems are caused by difficulties in adjusting to peers in class, adjusting to the environment, learning problems, attention, and psychological problems. Rifda El Fiah\textsuperscript{9} in her research studies the problems faced by students on college. The research found out that the students’ real life on college is not as beautiful as most people imagine that being a student is easy and easy to go through. On the contrary, there are many problems hindering the students’ success. These problems include: new students have difficulty adjusting to the atmosphere of the learning environment on college and the learning environment in the boarding house. The senior students face depression in achieving satisfying learning achievement, exhausting thesis writing, looking for life partners, career planning, and many others. The college environment can actually affect the mental health of students through education and learning, guidance from academic supervisors, and social stress experienced by the students. However, college is also a place where mental health can be identified by the presence of a companion from the lecturer to provide the right treatment.

In the learning process, each student must have a goal that must be achieved, both short-term and long-term goals that can change them after they follow a process of

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{9} Rifda El Fiah, Pengembangan Bimbingan Konseling di Perguruan Tinggi, (A research on Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty of Raden Intan State Islamic University Lampung) Tazkiyah Journal, in 2017.
education provided in college. With a variety of internal problems that they experience, students certainly cannot escape the demands of becoming graduates who can complete their studies on time, a high Grade Point Average (GPA), and various prouder achievements. Therefore, to deal with various academic demands, the students need a mentor to help them achieve what they aspire to. As Rosdidan (1997: 8) stated:

“Guidance, motivation, advice, etc. should be instilled in the students to have a strong personality, discipline in learning, and diligent in exploring knowledge. In this case, the college provides motivational guidance as well as academic advice to the students. The educator in question is the academic supervisor.”

Basically, academic supervisors in higher education act as supporting elements in academic guidance. The efforts of academic guidance from academic supervisors are directed as an effort to help students to develop their independence and abilities so that ultimately they could be responsible for themselves.

Usually, the guidance from an academic supervisor is done in groups or individually with the understanding that assistance given to a particular student may differ from guidance to other students who are under his guidance, depending on the interaction between the academic supervisor and students, and also depends on the open nature of the students.

In addition, academic guidance activities are usually carried out when the students will complete the Study Plan Card, they must meet the academic supervisors to consult the subjects they will take and evaluate their learning outcomes from the previous semester. For the sixth semester students, they usually conduct intense academic guidance when they begin considering the title for their thesis research or simply to consult practical problems in the field. As explained in the Academic Guidebook (2011: 20) that the process of academic guidance aims to foster and direct students so that the lecturing process can be well-planned, carried out, and monitored based on the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The integration of the three domains is implemented in the Tridarma (three pillars) of higher education (education, research and community service). The counseling process is carried out in a persuasive manner at least twice each semester.10

In the educational system, counseling services are one of the integral parts that are very important in achieving optimal educational outcomes. Without counseling services, organizing education at school and on college will not get satisfactory results. This notion is in accordance with the Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers,

10 Ita Ariska, Peran Dosen Pembimbing Akademik dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Mahasiswa (A research in the Dakwah and Communication Faculty, Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University Bandung Batch 2012).
and The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 111 of 2014 concerning Counseling and Guidance services. This service aims to help all students to achieve developmental tasks normally, have a healthy mentality, and obtain basic life skills.

The description above shows that realizing mental health for students is the responsibility of institutions and educators (teachers and lecturers) who are attached to their duties and responsibilities as educators, instructors and mentors in schools and/or on college. The task must also be recognized as a noble task to improve the quality of human resources.

2. THE NATURE OF COUNSELING SERVICES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The concept of counseling rooted in vocational guidance pioneered by Frank Parson in Boston in 1908 that has developed into a guidance service in education. Various approaches, including psychoanalysis, client-centered counseling, eclectic counseling approaches, and behavior modification are the development steps in developing the concept of counseling.11

In the meaning of helping the relationship, counseling is seen as a relationship that occurs between two parties, where one has the will to improve growth, development, maturity, improve the function and ability of other parties to deal with and handle their own lives.

The term counseling used in this paper is the translation of the terms in English counseling or counseling, derived from Latin counselium, which means: advice, information, dialogue, opinion or consideration given by someone to other people in connection with making decisions or future actions. Counseling is also called advocating, Tohari Musnomar, Wawan Wuruk, and MD Dahlan called it face-to-face questioning. The word counseling is usually coupled with the word guidance which in Indonesian terms becomes guidance and counseling.12

From the aspect of the terms, the experts provide definitions, boundaries, and counseling notions in accordance with their perspectives, including Walgito13 who states that guidance is an assistance given to individuals or groups of individuals in avoiding or overcoming difficulties in their lives so that individuals or groups of

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12 Saiful Akhyar Lubis, Konseling Islami dan Pendidikan Mental (Jurnal) Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Pascasarjana IAIN Sumatera Utara.
individuals can achieve their welfare. Sukardi\(^{14}\) states that guidance is a process of providing assistance to a person or group of people continuously and systematically by a counselor so that individuals or groups of individuals become independent. The definition of counseling according to Walgito is an assistance given to individuals in solving life problems through interviews and in ways that are in accordance with the conditions faced by individuals to achieve their welfare.

Counseling according to the definitions above is a form of assistance given to individuals through interviews to solve their life problems so that individuals could achieve welfare, recognize themselves and all capabilities they possess. The assistance can be provided by guidance and counseling.

By referring to several definitions proposed by the experts, it can be concluded that:

1. Guidance and counseling is a systematic and continuous process of providing assistance from the advisor to the advisee.
2. Assistance provided is aimed at achieving optimal capabilities, being able to understand themselves, directing themselves, overcoming problems, adjusting to the environment, and being able to make wise decisions in planning the future.
3. Personnel/people who have special knowledge, skills, and expertise, as well as adequate experience in the field of guidance and counseling are needed to carry out the assistance.\(^{15}\)

It is clear that counseling services in schools/colleges are a professional activity that must be carried out by professional officers in this case the teacher and/or lecturer in the educational institution.

Guidance and counseling services at schools/colleges are very important services to be able to change the attitudes of educating participants from negative to positive and from bad to good. In the guidance and counseling principle book, one of the practical objects that are the focus of guidance and counseling services is effective daily life (KES) and disturbed effective daily life (KES-T). Thus, basically, guidance and counseling services in an educational institution are efforts to deal with effective daily life and the efforts to deal with the disturbed effective daily life. Therefore, guidance and counseling services at educational institutions are expected to be able to help individuals to have a healthy mentality so that students are ready to face challenges and obstacles to get the life they aspire to in accordance with the expectations of the nation.


\(^{15}\) Eka Sari Setianingsih, *Peranan Bimbingan dan Konseling dalam memberikan layanan BK di sekolah di SD arsibel*. 
From the description stated by the experts, it can be concluded that counseling services in educational institutions are a process of holding face-to-face relationships between two or more people. The first party is a counselor who intentionally provides assistance, services to clients/counselees in a professional manner. The second party is the client/counselee who receives assistance and is expected to be able to solve his/her personal problems and is expected through this counseling service to build self-concept and self-confidence to be used in improving behavior in the future.

3. UNDERSTANDING AND INDICATORS OF HEALTHY MENTALITY

Health and sickness are biopsychosocial conditions that are integrated into human life, defining universal health to be accepted by all people. It is difficult to know whether someone is mentally disturbed or not because it is not easily measured, examined, or detected through instruments as well as physical health. It can be said that mental health is relative in the sense that there are no strict boundaries. Perfect harmony in one's soul does not exist since what is known is how far a person is from normal mental health. Even so, there are some experts trying to formulate a measurement of one's mental health. This can be seen in some descriptions of the definitions proposed. Healthy concepts according to WHO are a very complex description. These descriptions are an explanation of perfect conditions both physically and mentally. The definition offered by WHO is an ideal situation. This means that a healthy person should be seen from a psychological, biological, and social perspective. The term sick also exists which in English further divided into three, they are disease, illness, and sickness. According to Calhoun, the three words have specific meanings. Disease means biological pain, illness means psychologically pain, and sickness means sociological pain.

The description is supported by the explanation that in the 20th century many chronic diseases were caused by lifestyles. The disease arises from unhealthy lifestyles such as smoking, drinking alcohol, working with long-term sitting conditions, and excessive eating, the disease arises from the pattern of life. Diseases appear in the form of hypertension, diabetes, cancer, and the like. Healing such a disease requires a long-term treatment and improves the patient’s lifestyle.16 Health and sickness are biopsychosocial conditions that are united in human life. The introduction of the concepts of health and sickness, both physically and psychologically, is part of the introduction of humans to their conditions and how they are adapted to the environment.

In the concept of environment, an individual's condition in an environment will influence each other. The presence of individuals will produce dynamic conditions

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16 Soliyo, Manfaat Prilaku Spiritual Sufi pada kesehatan Mental dan Well-Being seseorang. jurnal studia Insania, May 2018, vol 6 No. 1, P. 9
for their environment, and also the environment will directly or indirectly affect individuals and have an impact on changes in certain individuals. This explains how a person suffering from a mental health disorder as a result of a failure in adapting to the surrounding environment.

Good mental health for individuals is a condition where individuals are free from all kinds of mental disorders, and conditions where individuals can function normally in carrying out their lives, especially in adjusting to problems that may be encountered throughout their lives. According to WHO, mental health is a condition of well-being realized by individuals, in which there are abilities to manage the stress, to work productively, and to participate in their community.\(^{17}\)

In general, the terminology of mental health is varied. Experts have a different opinion in defining mental health based on semantics paradigm, but substantially, they have the same direction of meaning. The principles of mental health are: mental health is more than just the existence of abnormal behavior, mental health is an ideal concept about the health of individual viewed from psychological aspects, and mental health as part of the quality characteristics of life.\(^{18}\)

Frank, LK (in Noto Soedirjo & Latipun 2002) said that mental health is a person who continues to grow, and mature in his life, accepts responsibility, finds adjustments in adapting and maintaining social rules and is tied to his culture.

On the other hand, Rogers introduced the concept of the fully functioning person as a form of the healthy mental condition. There are 5 main indications of the fully functioning person, namely: open to experience, there is life within, trust in his/her organism, freedom of experience, and creativity. Meanwhile, Maslow and Mitt Lemeun (in Notosoedirjo & Latipun 2002 as quoted by Bahril Hidayat) say that psychologically healthy condition is a condition in which an individual has achieved the highest needs - in a hierarchical manner in the theory of human needs hierarchy, namely self-actualization.

According to Daradjat,\(^{19}\) mental health is the condition of someone who has no symptoms of mental disorders or symptoms of mental illness. Semiun (2006) defines from psychiatrists that mental health is a condition in which a person controls and overcomes all feelings in his life so as not to cause mental health problems. Meanwhile Pieper and Leden (2016)\(^{20}\) describe mental health as a


condition where a person is free from guilt, can accept shortcomings or weaknesses, as well as resolve problems, have satisfaction in his social life, be happy, and have realistic self-estimates.

Furthermore, Zakiah Daradjat (Yahya Jaya 1994 in Fitoria) revealed that mental health is the realization of genuine harmony between psychological functions and the creation of adaptation among humans, themselves, and their environment, based on faith and piety and aiming for a meaningful and happy life in the world and hereafter.21

From the description above, it can be concluded that mental health is the inexistence of mental illness or disorder symptoms, the realization of genuine harmony between mental functions and having the ability to deal with occurring ordinary problems, to feel positive and happy about one’s ability, to adjust to oneself and environment based on faith and piety, and aims to achieve a responsible and happy life in the world and the hereafter.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTHY MENTAL

The mental health is characterized by harmonious aspects of life and in relation to other humans. In other words, mental health is an integral part of health and is a condition that enables optimal physical, mental, and social development of individuals and harmony with the other development.

A person who is mentally healthy has the following characteristics:

1. Feeling good about him/herself:
   1) Able to deal with situations
   2) Able to overcome disappointments in life
   3) Satisfied with his/her daily life
   4) Having reasonable self-esteem
   5) Assessing him/herself in a realistic manner, not excessively, and not self-degrading

2. Feeling comfortable dealing with other people:
   1) Able to love other people
   2) Having a personal permanent relationship
   3) Respecting the opinions of others
   4) Feeling to be a part of a group
   5) Not outsmarting others and also not allowing others to outsmart him

3. Able to meet needs:
   1) Establish realistic life goals
   2) Able to take a decision
   3) Able to accept responsibility
   4) Able to design the future

21 Daradjat, Ibid.
5) Can accept new ideas and experiences
6) Satisfied with his/her work.

Meanwhile WHO (Tumonggor 2002 quoted by Qonita Ali) has determined the characteristics of someone who is considered mentally healthy, namely: (1) can adapt, (2) have a strong personality, (3) free from a sense of failure, inner conflict, anxiety, and pressure, (4) norms, all attitudes, and behaviors are integrated with values, religiosity, and lawfulness, (5) be responsible, (6) the existence of maturity in carrying out an attitude and behavior with full-awareness, (7) independent in doing all the tasks and obligation without unintentionally forcing others to do his/her obligation, (8) can make good decisions.

From healthy mental characteristics stated above, it is clear that realizing a healthy mentality is a very important thing because someone who is mentally healthy possesses healthy character or personality traits. Of course, to realize this healthy mentality, the role of education is very strategic in order to realize an adult, mature, and polite personality.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

To realize the atmosphere of a healthy college life and be free from complex (chronic) mental health disorders, it is necessary to have a strategy on how to improve and maintain mental health well.

The characteristics and factors that disturb the mental health of a person or group or component in a community are described clearly in the section above. Therefore it is our responsibility, of course, in terms of all components of the college (lecturers, staffs, and student organizations) to make positive and productive efforts and endeavors. This should be a concern for providers of higher education, in this case, the college management, to encourage the creation of a conducive learning environment to students’ mental health.

At least the following can be done by higher education providers in creating a conducive learning environment. In general, the strategic components of mental health development for students can be carried out based on the following steps (Association, 2013 quoted from Hasfarini).

1. College institutions can influence mental health conditions through policies that support the development of mental health for students. For example, the policy requires new students to carry out physical and mental health checks so that students who need special treatment can be identified earlier.

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22Adisty Wismani, Ibid.
2. The climate and college environment that supports mental health can be created by encouraging supportive environment between college elements and paying attention to mental health in curriculum design.

3. Build awareness of the importance of mental health in college elements. This can be done through the existence of mental health promotion programs, such as self-management training for students, mental health campaigns to eliminate negative stigma for people who have mental health problems, and so on.  

4. Maximizing the role of the Counseling and Guidance and Academic Advisor lecturers in all faculties and departments in order to be able to play a role in helping and developing mental health for each student. As a Counseling and Guidance lecturer and Academic Advisor, the things that can be done by considering the capacity of the authority are in the form of (1) giving advice to the students, (2) helping them to solve their academic problems, (3) helping them to develop academic abilities (4) helping them to overcome problems that disturb their study process, (5) formulating the problems that they are incapable of handling and then entrust them to the capable one, (6) helping students in determining topics for scientific work, (7) helping students to get work experience (career), determine prospective life partners, adjust to their environment independently and so forth.

In line with the duties and/or authority of existing Academic Advisors, the role of mental health counseling and services for students can be done by the academic advisors in the form of (1) Guidance and advisory, (2) Administrative services, (3) Provision of personal consultation, (4) Recommendation services, (5) Study planning, (6) Job selection, (7) Recognizing one self’s interests and talents, strengths and weaknesses, personalities, and relationships with the environment, (8) Solving students’ personal problems, (9) Knowing the values of life, (10) Social relations with their peers, (11) Motivate learning, (12) Utilizing existing facilities.

Based on some of the roles above, an Academic Advisor can run them well and also be required to be able to understand the basic principles and techniques of psychology education and learning guidance especially the students’ mental health and psychology. By understanding the principles of mental health guidance techniques and theories of counseling and learning, it is expected that Academic Advisors should know when to counsel students. In addition to knowing when to provide guidance to students, the Academic Advisor should be able to reveal and solve problems faced by students. This is because students may be afraid to express their problems. These are the function and role of an Academic Advisor to enable the students to solve all the problems they face.

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25 Ibid.
26 Haryani, S.Pd (2018), Peran Ideal Dosen Pembimbing, an article.
6. CONCLUSION

Mental health is very important for humans, just like physical health in general. With a healthy mentality, all aspects of life possessed will run optimally. The healthy mentality is a state when an individual is free from any symptoms of mental disorders. A mentally healthy individual can function normally in undergoing his life, especially when adapting and dealing with problems that one may encounter throughout his life through stress management abilities.

Students’ life on campus is inseparable from the simple to complex problems they face that can make their mental health vulnerable. These problems arise from adjusting to peers and the environment, learning problems, solving or writing scientific work, career and life partner choices which all often cause a complex mentality, stress, and mental disturbance.

In order for students to adapt to the environment in a harmonious manner and be able to overcome the symptoms of mental health problems, efforts can be made in the form of developing mental health counseling services for students through systematic steps and service programs systematically, thus the counseling and guidance lecturers, as well as the academic advisors, play an important role in helping the students with mental health problems.

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