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The Impact Of Guidance And Counseling On Students' Psychosocial Development

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by various emotional, cognitive, and social changes that may affect individuals' psychosocial well-being. In the context of secondary education, particularly in Vocational High Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK), adolescents face academic demands, social relationships, and identity formation processes that may lead to psychosocial problems if not properly managed. Therefore, the presence of guidance and counseling services in schools plays an important role in supporting students' psychosocial development in an optimal manner. This study aimed to identify psychosocial problems experienced by students at SMK Gandapura, Bireuen Regency, to examine the implementation process of Islamic guidance and counseling services at the school, and to analyze the impact of Islamic guidance and counseling on adolescents' psychosocial development. This research employed a qualitative approach, with data collected through written interviews using open-ended questionnaires. The research participants consisted of 32 students of SMK Gandapura who had participated in guidance and counseling services. The findings indicate that adolescents' psychosocial conditions involve an interaction between emotional and cognitive aspects with the social environment and interpersonal relationships. In the domains of emotion and cognition within the school environment, students experienced emotional pressure, anxiety, discomfort, and confusion that affected learning processes and social interactions. However, support provided by guidance and counseling teachers and peers played an important role in reducing the negative effects of emotional distress and enhancing students' psychosocial adaptation. Students also reported positive changes after participating in counseling services, such as feeling calmer, relieved, and better understood. Overall, Islamic guidance and counseling at SMK Gandapura functions as a responsive support system and contributes positively to students' psychosocial development.

Keywords: *Guidance and Counseling, Psychosocial, Psychosocial Development, Adolescents, Vocational High School Students*

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial developmental phase marked by significant changes in psychological, social, and identity-related aspects. During this stage, individuals transition from childhood to adulthood while gradually moving from social and economic dependence toward relatively greater independence (Hikmandayani et al., 2023). The adolescent age range spans from 10 to 19 years and is generally divided into three stages: early adolescence (10-12 years), middle adolescence (13-15 years), and late adolescence (16-19 years). Each stage is characterized by distinct developmental features and requires adequate physical, mental, and spiritual readiness.

As a transitional period, adolescence involves complex changes, including physical development, emotional fluctuations, social dynamics, and cognitive maturation. These changes require adolescents to adapt effectively to their environment and developmental demands. Psychologically, adolescents are expected to manage various challenges, pressures, and internal conflicts arising from these changes. However, difficulties in coping with developmental demands may lead to psychosocial problems (Lathifah et al., 2024). This condition is further intensified by adolescents' internal characteristics, which tend to be emotionally unstable, as well as external influences such as changes in the social environment, making adolescence commonly referred to as a *storm and stress* period (Hikmandayani et al., 2023).

Healthy psychosocial development in adolescents is indicated by the ability to evaluate oneself objectively, establish positive peer relationships, develop appropriate interest in the opposite sex,

cultivate talents and interests, formulate aspirations, and demonstrate academic achievement consistent with personal potential. When these capacities do not develop optimally, adolescents are at risk of experiencing psychosocial problems, one of which is role confusion (Siagian). Psychosocial development represents an integration of psychological and social aspects that interact in shaping individual behavior. Psychosocial problems may serve as antecedents to mental health disorders, or conversely, mental health disorders may negatively affect individuals' social functioning (Wijaya & Kusmawati, 2023).

One group of adolescents particularly vulnerable to psychosocial problems is students in Vocational High Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK). Academic pressure, vocational skill demands, and the dynamics of the school environment place SMK students at a higher risk of experiencing stress, anxiety, negative thinking patterns, social withdrawal, depression, and acute stress (Saputra et al.). In extreme cases, unresolved psychosocial problems may lead to deviant behaviors, including suicide triggered by bullying within the school environment (Wijaya & Kusmawati, 2023). This highlights that mental health issues among SMK students constitute a serious concern requiring special attention.

In this context, school-based guidance and counseling services play a strategic role in assisting adolescents in addressing psychosocial problems. Guidance and counseling refer to a systematic and continuous process through which counselors provide assistance to students to help them understand, accept, and optimally develop their potential, thereby achieving overall well-being (Suryadi). One approach considered particularly relevant within religious communities is Islamic guidance and counseling, which is grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This approach emphasizes the strengthening of spiritual dimensions as an integral component of adolescents' mental health (Suryadi).

The implementation of guidance and counseling at SMK Gandapura involves collaboration among counselors, subject teachers, homeroom teachers, and parents, as well as the provision of individual and group counseling services. Individual counseling focuses on assisting students who experience difficulties in fulfilling their developmental tasks through processes of problem identification, causal analysis, exploration of alternative solutions, and appropriate decision-making. All counseling activities are conducted based on Islamic guidance and counseling principles derived from the Qur'an and Hadith.

Based on the foregoing discussion, Islamic guidance and counseling is expected to make a significant contribution to addressing psychosocial problems experienced by adolescents, particularly vocational high school students. Therefore, this study aims to describe the forms of psychosocial problems experienced by students and to analyze the impact of implementing Islamic guidance and counseling on students' psychosocial conditions at SMK Gandapura, Bireuen Regency.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to gain an in-depth understanding of adolescents' psychosocial problems and the role of guidance and counseling services within the school context. This approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to explore the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of the research participants comprehensively and contextually through narrative descriptions. The study was conducted at a vocational high school (SMK) located in Gandapura Subdistrict, Bireuen Regency, in October 2025. The research participants consisted of vocational high school students aged 16-17 years, who fall into the category of late adolescence. The study population included all students of SMK Gandapura, while participants were selected using a nonprobability sampling technique through purposive sampling, with criteria including students who were actively enrolled, had previously participated in guidance and counseling activities, and were in grades X, XI, and XII. Data were collected through written interviews using open-ended questionnaires to provide respondents with broader opportunities for reflection and in-depth expression of their experiences and perspectives. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively from the pre-field stage through the fieldwork phase, involving data

reduction, systematic data presentation in the form of thematic narratives, and continuous conclusion drawing and verification to ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Respondents

The respondents in this study consisted of 32 students of SMK Gandapura, all of whom had previously participated in school guidance and counseling (GC) services. All respondents were aged 16–17 years, which falls within the category of late adolescence. Research data were obtained through written interviews using open-ended questionnaires, allowing students to express their emotional, cognitive, and social experiences in a reflective and in-depth manner.

Psychosocial Profile of Students at SMK Gandapura

Table 1. Psychosocial Profile of Students at SMK Gandapura

Aspect	Written Interview Results	Respondents
Emotion & Social Environment	Students have not fully experienced enjoyable learning due to emotional pressure and personal problems.	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, P15, P16, P18, P20, P21, P22, P23, P24, P25, P26, P27, P28, P29, P30
Cognition (Perception) & Social Environment	Students experience anxiety, discomfort, and confusion during adolescence in the school environment.	P8, P9, P13, P17, P25, P28
Emotion & Social Relationships	Negative emotions interfere with students' learning processes and social interactions.	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P14, P15, P16, P18, P20, P21, P23, P27, P28, P29, P30
Social Relationships	Relationships with peers and teachers are not fully harmonious and trigger stress, sadness, and anger.	P1, P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P13, P15, P25, P30, P31
Cognition (Perception) & Social Relationships	Support from guidance counselors and peers helps students cope with emotional conditions.	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P8, P10, P12, P14, P16

Based on Table 1, the findings indicate that the majority of students have not fully experienced emotional comfort in the school environment. Emotional pressure arising from personal and social problems affects the quality of students' interactions within their learning environment. This condition reflects difficulties in emotional regulation that influence adolescents' psychosocial development, as emotional instability during adolescence may simultaneously affect social and academic functioning (Santrock, 2019; Papalia & Martorell, 2021).

In the domain of cognition and the social environment, students reported feelings of anxiety, discomfort, and confusion during their adolescent phase at school. Psychosocially, these conditions represent cognitive difficulties in interpreting the developmental transition they are undergoing. Negative perceptions of the school environment tend to emerge when interpersonal relationships are perceived as stressful, thereby triggering recurrent anxiety. The confusion experienced by students aligns with Erikson's concept of identity versus role confusion, in which adolescents attempt to reconcile self-identity with surrounding social demands (Erikson, 1968).

Furthermore, in the domain of emotion and social relationships, negative feelings such as stress, sadness, and anger were reported to disrupt students' learning processes and social interactions. This finding is consistent with the view that emotional turbulence during adolescence can hinder learning concentration and the quality of social relationships (Santrock, 2019; Steinberg, 2020). Nevertheless, support provided by guidance counselors and peers was perceived as helpful in

managing these emotional conditions. A supportive social environment functions as a protective factor that strengthens adolescents' psychosocial resilience (Bandura, 2018; Masten, 2014).

Guidance and Counseling Process at SMK Gandapura

Table 2. Guidance and Counseling Process at SMK Gandapura

Aspect	Written Interview Results	Respondents
Participation in GC	All students have participated in guidance and counseling services	P1-P30
GC Approach	Counselors apply a friendly and open approach	P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P12, P13, P14, P15, P16
Service Focus	GC focuses on students' emotional, social, and personal problems	P2, P4, P6, P8, P10, P12, P14
Counseling Stages	Counseling is conducted gradually through guidance, motivation, and solutions	P1, P3, P5, P7, P9, P11, P13, P15
Interest in GC	Almost all students are interested and willing to participate in GC services	P1-P30

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that guidance and counseling services at SMK Gandapura are not merely implemented formally but have become integrated into school life as a psychosocial support mechanism for students. The participation of all respondents suggests that the program is inclusive and addresses students' needs comprehensively. The friendly and open approach adopted by counselors creates a psychologically safe counseling environment, encouraging students to openly express emotional, social, and personal issues. This condition fosters the development of supportive and collaborative counseling relationships between counselors and students.

The focus of guidance and counseling services on emotional, social, and personal issues indicates alignment with adolescents' developmental needs. The gradual counseling process through guidance, motivation, and problem-solving enables students to understand their problems more systematically and develop self-reflection skills. This staged process plays a crucial role in helping students regulate emotions, manage social conflicts, and make more adaptive decisions. This finding supports Corey's (2017) assertion that effective adolescent counseling should be progressive and oriented toward strengthening clients' self-awareness.

The high level of students' interest in participating in guidance and counseling services reflects their trust in the role of school counselors. Such trust is a key indicator of counseling effectiveness, as active student engagement is a prerequisite for psychosocial change. This finding is consistent with Geldard and Geldard's (2016) view that the effectiveness of adolescent counseling is strongly influenced by the quality of the counselor–client relationship and students' perceptions of safety and acceptance during the counseling process. Thus, guidance and counseling services at SMK Gandapura can be understood not only as a problem-solving mechanism but also as a space for continuous psychosocial strengthening.

Impact of Guidance and Counseling on Students' Psychosocial Development

Table 3. Impact of Guidance and Counseling on the Psychosocial Development of Students at SMK Gandapura

Aspect	Written Interview Results	Respondents
Emotional Condition After GC	Students feel calmer, relieved, and understood	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P9, P10
Problem Solving	GC helps students resolve personal and social problems	P1-P30
Decision Making	GC helps students think more maturely in decision making	P1-P30
Social Adaptation	Students become more capable of adapting	P1-P30

	and communicating	
Psychosocial Changes	Positive changes occur in emotions, attitudes, and behaviors	P1-P30

Based on Table 3, all respondents reported positive changes after participating in guidance and counseling services. Feelings of calmness, relief, and being understood indicate that the counseling process successfully established psychological safety. This condition allows students to express previously suppressed feelings and problems, thereby gradually reducing emotional distress. Such experiences reflect the function of counseling as an essential space for emotional recovery in adolescents' psychosocial development within the school context.

In addition to emotional benefits, guidance and counseling services contributed significantly to helping students resolve personal and social problems. The counseling process encouraged students to understand the sources of their problems, consider alternative solutions, and make more rational and mature decisions. This improved decision-making ability represents an important indicator of developing cognitive functioning and self-control, which aligns with adolescents' developmental tasks. These findings suggest that counseling serves not only as a venue for emotional expression but also as a psychosocial learning process that fosters students' independence and responsibility.

Another notable impact perceived by students was enhanced social adaptation and communication skills. After participating in guidance and counseling services, students became more open in interactions, better able to adjust to diverse social situations, and demonstrated more positive attitudes toward peers and teachers. The changes in emotional states, attitudes, and behaviors experienced by all respondents underscore the strategic role of guidance and counseling services in supporting students' emotional well-being and overall psychosocial development. This finding aligns with Gysbers and Henderson's (2012) assertion that effective school guidance and counseling services contribute to strengthening students' personal and social competencies, and is further supported by Ritonga et al. (2023), who found that guidance and counseling services promote more adaptive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors.

CONCLUSIONS

The psychosocial development of adolescents in this study is reflected in the interrelationship between emotional and cognitive aspects and the social environment as well as the interpersonal relationships experienced by students at school. The findings indicate that emotional dynamics, patterns of thinking, and the quality of social relationships mutually influence one another in shaping the psychosocial experiences of students at SMK Gandapura. The guidance and counseling program implemented at the school has been shown to function as an adaptive and responsive support system for students' psychosocial needs, as evidenced by an open, empathetic approach that is oriented toward students' personal and social issues. Overall, guidance and counseling services have a positive impact on students' psychosocial development, including emotional regulation, decision-making abilities, social adaptation skills, and constructive changes in attitudes and behaviors.

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