

Tele-Counseling Services for Clients During COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Tele-Counseling service for clients during the COVID-19 pandemic period becomes a very efficient and effective service model. The limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic situation encourage counselors to find the most reliable alternative in conducting guidance and counseling activities to continue to be held. Social media becomes one of the most likely alternatives to guidance and counseling to continue so that clients can get good service even though the COVID-19 pandemic still haunts us. In this study, researchers researched with a qualitative descriptive approach whereby that approach can draw the source of the study can observe well even though the media used is online-based. With Tele-Counseling services, counselors can get client information from time to time well or in real-time; a counselor can still monitor client information. With Tele Counseling services, counselors will provide various messages and information to clients to be motivated to stay active properly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Tele-Counseling service provides a model of online-based counseling services that is certainly a model of guidance and counseling services that clients desperately need in the COVID-19 pandemic where the client still gets services from the counselor even though he or she is at home or when he has to work; the client can still consult with his counselor.

Keywords: *Tele-Counseling, Clients, COVID-19.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The world globally deals with challenges that can be said to be very formidable. It seems that solid and efficient solutions are not yet to be found. The impact is very large and comprehensive in all aspects of human life, including education, social, culture, and most importantly, health. The problem we have been dealing with is COVID-19 [1]. The government made policies to reduce all access in and out of the country and closed several transportation accesses on the land, sea, and domestic air transportation to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 Virus called large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) [2]. The virus, which has not found a cure, makes every individual look for shortcuts to stay active even by adhering to strict health protocols, such as creating an online business, doing education, teaching, and office work from home. At the beginning of 2020,

we were shocked by the COVID-19, which has infected almost all aspects. The World Health Organization in early 2020 warned the global community that the world situation would experience an emergency due to the spread of the coronavirus [3]. The spread of the coronavirus is increasingly widespread in many countries where it starts from the city of Wuhan and continues to develop rapidly to the provinces in mainland China. The movement from the coronavirus in the bamboo curtain country so quickly in 3 months has had a very extraordinary impact where the coronavirus has claimed thousands of lives human. The condition is getting worse where the coronavirus has crossed outside of China and has had a tremendous pandemic impact in Europe and America. In many countries, they have finally implemented lockdowns to control the spread of the coronavirus while researching COVID-19 [4].

The Indonesian government started declaring a coronavirus emergency after discovering that an

Indonesian citizen got infected for the first time in Depok. The Indonesian government took steps by issuing a program of countermeasures to control the spread of the coronavirus by carrying out massive socialization efforts with large-scale social restrictions or social distancing [5].

The Indonesian government has begun to take steps starting with the implementation of services from home. We have been familiar with work from home, and of course, this has an impact on society in community activities in general. It affects the client mentoring process where the implementation of client guidance that has been face-to-face has to be transferred, not by face to face. Furthermore, the government issued a government instruction regarding working at home, which means that service activities for the community can be carried out without meeting in person, so that there is a transfer of counseling services to online counseling services, or we call it Tele-Counseling. With Tele-Counseling, client guidance can be done not face-to-face but by utilizing electronic or online media. Client guidance must not stop even though the COVID-19 pandemic is hitting Indonesia. Client mentoring activities have been changing from face-to-face to virtual but still have to be controlled by the counselor using Tele-Counseling or virtual services [6].

Client mentoring activities are directed in the form of direct, face-to-face guidance, and of course, the client remains at home, and the counselor provides services either from the office or at home by utilizing Internet facilities. Coaching activities are carried out by taking advantage of social media platforms that clients and counselors can easily access. The platforms to be used can be Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp, where these platforms are not always difficult for clients and counselors to use. In this case, the Correctional Center encourages community counselors to take advantage of appropriate social media in the implementation of Tele-Counseling services for clients who are currently undergoing social reintegration programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The counselor in providing Tele-Counseling services has a role in overcoming the barriers to face-to-face client guidance, with these services still offer guidance and counseling to develop a good character for clients even though the client remains at home. In addition, it also provides advice to clients so that they can still improve skills even from home so that clients can learn to be able to live independently even though the Covid19 pandemic is hitting Indonesia [7].

Tele-Counseling has been described as a type of Internet-based counseling service in which counselors and clients are not in the same physical location. During the coronavirus outbreak in Indonesia, they communicate by using computer-mediated communication to adjust service models for clients [8].

Various models of online counseling services grew and developed during this Covid19 pandemic, even by introducing Tele-Counseling or online counseling as a way for mentoring to occur to clients. Instant messaging, synchronous chat, text messaging, video conferencing, and e-mail were all used to implement Tele-Counseling [9]. Tele-Counseling has developed over the last two decades, where this service can begin to be accepted on the consideration that the service can continue even if not face to face in one area. As a result, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Tele-Counseling is being used as a strategy in counseling facilities. Counselors must have sufficient technical skills to be able to gradually perform mentoring with their clients via online media and/or make all progress online in order to introduce this service [10]–[12]. The advantages of Tele-Counseling for corrective service institutions where network access is increasingly essential so that the service can reach clients and provide immediate guidance without having to meet them in person, reasonableness, and ease of record-keeping [12].

Because of the anonymity of Tele-Counseling, counselors who participate in it feel less powerless to reveal their data and less insecure about their problems. [7]. The need for Tele-Counseling, on the other hand, has raised questions about decreased visual cues, inability to contact in emergencies, and the need for healthy control. Many experts in the field have expressed reservations about tele-moral counseling's implications, including competence, informed consent, privacy, and protection. Furthermore, those who lack sufficient creativity or who do not behave cannot use Tele-Counseling [13].

Clients have shown both the advantages and advancements associated with Tele-Counseling programs, according to a previous report. The research looked at client interactions with a text message emergency therapy service that was available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Even though their main concern was how the counselor would explore their feelings and sentiments through message formats, participants projected the need for individual communication, confidentiality, and the ability to reread and change their written explanations as positive aspects of Tele-Counseling administration [14].

Clients indicated that their primary reasons for pursuing therapy online were anonymity, accessibility, and the credentials of counselors, according to an analysis of those who have shown interest in online chat sessions for coercion issues [15]. They did, however, express reservations about the need for visible protection and the security of online chat sessions. Human habits are no longer the same at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Working from home, learning from home, social distancing, physical distancing, and other factors are all controlled in various

countries around the world. Furthermore, these changes have the potential to cause mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress [16].

Corrective services cannot be provided face-to-face due to the need for counselors and clients to engage in social and physical distancing during the therapy phase, but physical distancing is not allowed. As a result, all counselors around the world have adopted a Tele-Counseling method, whether it's face-to-face, by e-mail, WhatsApp, video call, or even phone. Currently, the only option during the COVID-19 outbreak is to use Tele-Counseling [17].

The use of Internet-based Tele-Counseling services necessitates a number of social media platforms that can be used to deliver Tele-Counseling services to clients. An Internet package is needed to access social media or networks used in delivering Tele-Counseling services to clients in order to provide these services. [18].

Tele-Counseling programs are inextricably linked to the availability of supportive infrastructures, such as data packages and appropriate networking platforms for accessing social media, which can serve as a forum for Tele-Counseling activities. As a result, we can infer that the realization of Tele-Counseling to provide guidance and counseling for clients during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a renewal of counseling programs for clients in correctional institutions.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Researchers use a qualitative approach to perform analysis in this report, with the goal of providing an overview of the application of Tele-Counseling as a service that can be used as a model for providing therapy to clients without having to meet face to face in one place [19]. The use of the qualitative approach is focused on the possibility that the data and knowledge gathered in the field are factual data that need to be studied further, necessitating the conduct of interviews to help the author gain a better understanding and information [20]. Primary and secondary data sources are used in this analysis, with data coming from respondents or clients as primary data sources and documentation studies as secondary data sources [21].

The purpose of this study is to find out the extent of Tele-Counseling services that can be an alternative in the efforts to provide correctional counselors for clients during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. In this research, the approach used is with a qualitative research approach so that it can provide information in depth related to informants, as well as other data sources, both primary data sources and secondary data sources in this study.

Researchers collected data in collecting data, carried out in 3 (three) ways: observation against clients,

interviews with clients and other data sources, and conducting documentation studies. The data analysis technique used in this research is the Triangulation Model, where taking steps for data collection is an attempt to sort, discard, organize, predict, and categorize data that will produce an answer to the problem that will be answered [22]. With this data analysis series, data that usually appear messy and disorganized becomes easier and more detailed[23].

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Non-face-to-face counseling services were introduced in the 1960s and the early 1970s. For the first time, software programs were introduced by Eliza and Parry. At that time, it was the forerunner of the emergence of counseling services with text-based media, and when the counseling service only relies on electronic mail [24].

The development of the 4.0 industrial revolution encourages even more rapid growth of non-face-to-face counseling services by switching to the use of communication tools that provide software, be it chat messengers, messenger videos, and others that can be accessed only by smartphones and smart devices. Social media is an online media tool used in implementing the Tele-Counseling service; where to use the platform, an internet network is needed [25].

As a person who provides counseling services for clients, the counselor is required to be able to understand the changes in the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, innovation is needed to give organized guidance, ensuring the client is in a safe situation. COVID-19 pandemic requires counselors to act as facilitators for the needs of clients during their guidance period; finding a form of counseling service without having to meet face-to-face in one area, with Tele-Counseling services as an effort to provide counseling services by utilizing various social media platforms [26].

The available online media are indeed diverse, so the counselor, when choosing online media, must be able to provide benefits for the implementation of the counseling service on a platform that can keep confidentiality. Thus, the client remains protected when receiving the service. Today's growing online media is inseparable from the need for its supporting devices, both hardware and software, because the media platform used can be run easily by clients and counselors themselves [27]. The online media should provide services to exchange information so that online media service users refer to them as windows, providing news to reflect many situations that arise and develop in our society.

The following is an example of the efforts made by clients and their counselors who use supporting facilities in carrying out counseling services even though they do not meet in person in the same area. Counselors can initiate

communication with clients using telephone, e-mail, and other electronic messages. The counselor does this before implementing the Tele-Counseling service, so preparations are needed to begin with the availability of data packages and smartphone devices that can be used in the Tele-Counseling service platform [26].

Tele-Counseling services are carried out by utilizing internet services (1) the internet service focuses on meeting client needs in providing online consulting services; (2) internet services will provide convenience for these service users with the ease of storing data from the guidance process carried out by the counselor to his clients [28]. Tele-Counseling services can also use websites, messenger instants, and other platforms that can encourage faster access so that these services can be accessed more quickly by clients and counselors. So, to carry out archiving of Tele-Counseling service activities, one must be able to consider the ethics, confidentiality, and security of the data to be archived, preserving a professional value of the counselor in providing services [29].

Counselors with Tele-Counseling are able to provide services by utilizing popular social media, which are easy to access and very simple to use. With social media, it is expected that clients and counselors can virtually meet face to face, even though they are in different places. Tele-Counseling, although using social media platforms and video conferencing, can encourage empathy, and the services by the counselor can be carried out well [30].

3.1 Ethics in Tele-Counseling Services

Tele-Counseling Services still prioritize an ethic that must be upheld when a counselor provides counseling to his clients. As for the ethics developed in Tele-Counseling, in general, it does not change much with the ethics in face-to-face services. The difference lies in the tools used so that the service is not carried out face-to-face in the same area. In Tele-Counseling services, the ethics are as follows: (1) What are the shortcomings or advantages of the services provided by Tele-Counseling; (2) the use of supporting facilities in Tele-Counseling services using an online-based platform; (3) Tele-Counseling services are carried out based on the accuracy of the assessment results; (4) in providing access, the use of computers is vital because Tele-Counseling will last a long time and computer equipment is needed; (5) Tele-Counseling still upholds the legal aspect that will continue to oversee the implementation of these services; (6) technical matters when the service is provided across borders needs to be the attention of the client in its use; (7) each policy must be implemented in accordance with the existing regulations governing the use of internet service platforms in providing Tele-Counseling; (8) in using the site attention must be made to client needs and the security for clients and counselors.

3.2 The Importance of Tele-Counseling Services in the COVID-19 Pandemic

It is known early that the spread of the coronavirus occurs in close contact between persons, from a splash of saliva during communication between people at a remarkably close distance, where the saliva could stick to the skin of another person. Likewise, when someone is sneezing, the virus gets airborne, sticking to other people's bodies, putting people in close contact at risk. For this reason, since the coronavirus outbreak phenomenon first started in Wuhan, efforts have been made in many countries to use safety equipment when meeting other people. People started to use masks to prevent contracting the virus from other people or having direct contact with other people who are at risk. In March 2020, Indonesia hit a milestone with the first case, and thus the incessant Social Distancing efforts in all forms of activities, both in social service institutions and the government. The Indonesian government issued Presidential Decree Number 7 of 2020, relating to the Emergency Response Period, on March 17, 2020.

This condition encourages the Correctional Directorate; in this case, the Correctional Center must continue to provide services to correctional clients. Hence, there must be alternative efforts in providing clients with non-face-to-face guidance services from so, with this condition, Tele-Counseling Services during the Covid19 pandemic have become very important as a medium for counseling services provided by Correctional Center to correctional clients.

The Correctional Center, as the spearhead of the Directorate General of Corrections at the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia, seeks to make a breakthrough, a method or model of guidance and counseling that is suitable for clients during the emergency response period in Indonesia. This condition encourages community counselors to adjust counseling services by switching to virtual ones, better-known as Tele-Counseling. In carrying out community counseling services, they must also provide services to increase personal values and related counseling services to offer encouragement so that clients can continue to work during the pandemic.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, non-face-to-face services or Tele-Counseling is used to provide counseling guidance to correctional clients, with the application of non-face-to-face services or Tele-Counseling being a way out to break the chain of COVID-19 spread by staying at home while still also receiving community guidance services, and abiding by the government emergency response periods. In order to provide counseling services, a counselor must have knowledge of how to create client confidence so that a state of acceptance of the counselor's role in the client's life can be established, and the intervention can take place.

3.3 Stages in Tele-Counseling Services During the Covid Pandemic 19.

Tele-Counseling services are carried out by a counselor with the following stages:

a. Preparation Stage

The preparation phase begins with the beginning of preparing various things that are technical in the form of preparing various hardware and software that will be used in the process of Tele-Counseling services. This preparation stage includes the preparation of counselors to understand various knowledge related to tool use skills, academic feasibility, ethical and legal assessment, and governance.

b. Stages of Tele-Counseling Service Process

The Tele-Counseling service process is not much different from the face-to-face counseling service, which starts with delivery to assessment, interpretation, coaching, and assessment. The difference is that counselors and counselors should be able to establish relationships with the help of other devices during the implementation stage so that guidance and counseling services occur more flexibly. The selection of techniques or approaches to be used is tailored to the problems faced by the counselor.

c. Post-Counseling Stages

The Post-Tele-Counseling Service stage is the last stage where the follow-up of the Tele-Counseling service process has been implemented. Three possibilities can occur, namely, (1) Tele-Counseling services are successful, characterized by the clients having effective daily life, (2) Tele-Counseling services will be continued in the next service process, or (3) clients are transferred to other counselors or experts.

3. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic period is not an obstacle in providing counseling services to correctional clients. When the Government of Indonesia imposed the Emergency Response Period, efforts had to be made to have other forms of counseling or to transfer such counseling services from face-to-face to virtual meeting services by utilizing technology. Tele-Counseling has become one of the models of counseling services that can replace face-to-face services. As for the media used in the implementation of Tele-Counseling, some media have been used by community leaders such as video conferences, WhatsApp messenger, instant messenger, telegram, Instagram, and many others. The chosen media must be based on the characteristics and capabilities of the client in using the application. Hence, obstacles can be avoided in the implementation of Tele-Counseling services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stages in the performance of guidance and

counseling services include the preparation stage, the process of guidance and counseling services, and post-service guidance and counseling.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

¹ MUHAMMAD ALI EQUATORA, Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Writing – Review & Editing, ² RACHMAYANTHY, Supervision, ³ Odi Jarodi, Methodology, Funding Acquisition, ⁴ SHINTA MULIATI, Investigation, ⁵ AMBO UPE, Writing - Review & Editing.

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