



## The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Middle Schools

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Received : June 18, 2024

Accepted : August 8, 2024

Published : October 31, 2024

Citation: Damanik, N., Lubis, S, A., Darmayanti, N. (2024). The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Middle Schools. *Ilomata International Journal of Social Science*, 5(4), 952-970.

<https://doi.org/10.61194/ijss.v5i4.1302>

**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to explore the implementation of counseling guidance in the context of the success of the Independent Curriculum in secondary schools. The Independent Curriculum is known as an initiative to promote competency-based education with an emphasis on developing relevant skills, knowledge, and attitudes for students. The research method used is a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. The research participants consisted of counseling guidance teachers, school principals, and students involved in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and participatory observations. The results of the study show that the implementation of counseling guidance plays an important role in supporting the success of the Independent Curriculum. The findings highlight that counseling guidance assists students in identifying and developing competencies in accordance with the demands of the new curriculum. In addition, the role of counseling guidance teachers in facilitating students' understanding and motivation towards the new curriculum is also very important. This study provides practical implications for the development of further education policies in integrating the role of counseling guidance as the main supporter in the success of the Independent Curriculum. It is hoped that this research can be the foundation for the development of a more effective counseling guidance program in supporting broader educational goals.

**Keywords:** Counseling Guidance, Implementation, Independent Curriculum, Secondary Education



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## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the government's efforts to produce and prepare the next generation of the nation who are qualified and able to be competitive. For this reason, Indonesia requires all its citizens to participate in a government compulsory study program of at least 9 years consisting of six years in elementary school and three years in junior high school. This is in accordance with Article 1 Paragraph (18) of Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which reads: "Compulsory learning is the minimum educational program that must be followed by

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Indonesia Citizens on the responsibility of the Government and Regional Governments" ([UU No. 20, 2003](#)).

Education is not just an activity, but the main foundation in building and improving the quality and progress of a nation. Especially at the primary and secondary education levels, the curriculum is the main guide that forms the foundation of education. In Indonesia, the Independent Curriculum has emerged as a new milestone in the world of education, with the main goal of presenting education that is more relevant, inclusive, and based on the real needs of students. The Independent Curriculum not only prioritizes the transfer of knowledge alone, but also emphasizes the development of skills, attitudes, and values that are essential for individual success in this complex modern era. Through its holistic approach ([Harwisaputra et al., 2024](#)). The Independent Curriculum aims to prepare students to be able to think critically, adapt to change, collaborate effectively, and face global challenges with confidence. In addition, by affirming its inclusivity, the Independent Curriculum ensures that every student, without exception, gets an equal opportunity to access quality education. Thus, the Independent Curriculum is not only an educational innovation, but also a real commitment in answering the demand for a better, fairer, and more equitable education for all Indonesia citizens ([Maskur, 2023](#)).

The Independent Curriculum marks a paradigm shift in education, with a primary focus on developing students' individual potential holistically. Through this approach, the curriculum is no longer only oriented to knowledge transfer, but also pays attention to aspects of skills, attitudes, and values that are important for the overall development of students. However, to achieve these goals, it is important to acknowledge and pay attention to the psychological and emotional factors of students that also affect the success of the curriculum. Each student has their own uniqueness and challenges in facing the learning process ([Efray Kurniawan & Effendi, 2024](#)).

According to ([Ariyanti et al., 2024](#)) Some students face motivational issues, anxiety, or learning difficulties that require special support. Therefore, guidance and counseling are very important in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. With integrated guidance and counseling services, schools can provide more individualized attention to students, help them overcome psychological and emotional barriers, and guide them to academic and personal success. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of the psychological and emotional aspects of students is the key in ensuring the effectiveness and success of the Independent Curriculum in achieving its noble goals ([Bahri, 2018](#)).

Character education is an important foundation in forming individuals with strong and dignified character. In this effort, Dr. Thomas Lickona highlights three key inseparable components: moral knowledge, moral concern, and moral action. Moral knowledge provides the foundation for an individual's understanding of life's underlying moral values, while moral concern builds empathy and a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others ([Fatchul, 2020](#)). By having moral knowledge and concern, individuals can direct their moral actions in the right direction, translating values in real actions in daily life. By combining these three components, character education becomes more than just a concept, but a journey towards integrity and sustainable moral leadership ([Kusuma, 2020](#)).

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In the midst of a change in the educational paradigm realized through the Independent Curriculum, the role of guidance and counseling at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul is increasingly becoming the main focus. Not just a problem-solving tool, guidance and counseling are considered as proactive instruments that provide support to students in overcoming various personal, academic, and social barriers that may hinder the learning process. Through well-integrated services, the school is able to provide timely assistance to students in dealing with the challenges they face, allowing them to feel supported and understood.

By helping students recognize and manage their emotions, develop effective study skills, and address personal or social issues that may be troubling, guidance and counseling become an important bridge between the curriculum implemented in schools and the individual needs and potentials of students. In the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, solid support from guidance and counseling services is key to ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to grow and develop optimally, and State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul has an important role in running the Independent Curriculum successfully and has a real positive impact on student education.

This is in line with research conducted by ([Fauziah et al., 2022](#)) The results of his research show that guidance and counseling teachers have an important role in success in school as an extension that can diagnose and identify the needs of students. Counseling guidance teacher are required to be skilled in optimizing learning effectiveness and improving the quality of education by using the most appropriate learning approaches/methods for students. The implementation of the independent learning curriculum to become a relevant and targeted guideline and requires counseling guidance teacher as implementers of the independent learning curriculum to run effectively. Then the research conducted by ([Hayati et al., 2022](#)). Counseling guidance teachers have an important role, namely not only providing material but character education is also very important and useful for student behavior, in a way that teachers not only provide material for free but can provide examples to students, so that students are able to be dedicated and innovate in the independent learning curriculum. As well as research conducted by ([Hapni et al., 2024](#)) The results of his research show that counseling guidance teachers play a role in implementing the independent curriculum in schools. The roles of guidance and counseling teachers are: (a) as a counselor, (b) as a consultant, (c) as a coordinator, (d) as career development, and (e) as an assessor. Therefore, the conclusion is that counseling guidance teachers participate in the independent curriculum, especially facilitating the development and growth of students, developing talents, interests, and potentials that students have. From the previous research that is relevant to this study, the difference lies in the focus of the research where in the previous research only focused on counseling guidance teachers but did not explain the level of education taught by the counseling guidance teacher, while in the current research the level of education supported by counseling guidance teachers is the secondary school level, especially State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul.

Through the author's observation at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul, it can be seen that the role of guidance and counseling has great relevance in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Counselors at the school are actively involved in providing support to students to overcome various obstacles that may hinder their learning process. From direct

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interaction with students, it can be seen that guidance and counseling not only focus on problem management, but also pay attention to the development of students' potential holistically. These services provide students with the opportunity to overcome personal, academic, and social challenges by feeling supported and understood. Thus, guidance and counseling at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul is a key factor in ensuring that every student can succeed in facing the demands of the Independent Curriculum.

Thus, this study aims to find out the role of guidance and counseling in the context of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. By looking directly at the experiences and results of guidance and counseling interventions in the school, this research is expected to provide valuable insights into how these services can assist students in achieving academic success and personal development under the new paradigm of the Independent Curriculum. Through a deeper understanding of the role of guidance and counseling in the context of this innovative education, it is hoped that it can make a significant contribution to efforts to develop a more inclusive, relevant, and globally competitive education in Indonesia.

In addition, the theoretical and practical contributions in this study are as follows: This finding can contribute to existing counseling theories by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of group counseling, especially for students from disjointed families. While practical contribution: These findings serve as a resource for educators and school counselors, offering them insight into effective strategies for supporting at-risk students. Nevertheless, based on the above presentation, it attracted researchers to conduct a study entitled "Implementation of Counseling Guidance in the Context of the Success of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul".

## METHOD

The research approach chosen is a qualitative approach. The reason is because the author wants to explore optimally and deeply about the integration of services and the impact of the independent curriculum on Counseling Guidance. (Sugiyono, 2021). This is as affirmed by Sugiyono that, "Qualitative research is a type of research about a person's life, stories, behaviors, and also organizational functions, social movements or reciprocal relationships". Included in this case is the service strategy and the impact of the independent curriculum on Counseling Guidance at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul.

Researchers in qualitative research also play a role as research instruments. During the data collection process, the author is really expected to be able to interact with the object that is the target of the research. In the sense of the word, the author uses a natural approach and is sensitive to the symptoms that are seen, heard, felt and thought. The success of the research is highly dependent on field data (Ramdhan, 2021). The use of qualitative research methods allows a person to find out the impact of services that are in accordance with the Independent Curriculum.

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Data is the result of researchers' records, either in the form of facts or figures. "The source of data in the study is the subject from which the data can be obtained". Data is a collection of information materials from the results of the author's record, both in the form of facts and numbers that can be used as material to compile information. In the qualitative research method, the data source was selected purposively and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique of taking data sources with certain considerations, such as the person is considered to know the most about what the researcher expects (Sumargo, 2020). Meanwhile, snowball sampling is a sampling technique that initially has a small number, but gradually becomes large. The basis for considering the use of this snowball sampling technique is because with this sampling technique, it is considered to be more representative both in terms of data collection and data development.

By taking data sources that are selected purposively and snowball sampling, data sources are selected by people who are considered to be very knowledgeable about the problem to be researched or who are also authorized in the matter and the number cannot be determined, because with that few data sources, if they cannot provide complete data, then look for other people who can use the data source.

The subjects of this study are several informants involved in the implementation of guidance and counseling at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul who are key informants, this researcher's informant is snowball, meaning that the number of respondents can increase in number in accordance with the stipulation and fulfillment of data that will be obtained from the field.

As an informant, in qualitative research is an informant who is deliberately selected or determined. This is based on the assumption that the informant is able and authorized to provide complete and reliable information about the existing elements. As information on the data of this study, the author took 4 data sources: The principal as the person in charge of the implementation of education at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. PKS Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. Counseling Guidance Teacher for grades VII and VIII at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. Students of grades VII and VIII at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul.

In order to obtain an accurate picture of the services and the impact of the independent curriculum on Counseling Guidance which is carried out at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul, it is carried out: According to Sugiyono, observation is interpreted as systematic observation and recording of symptoms that appear in the object of research. This observation and recording is carried out on the object in the place where the event occurred. This method is used to see and observe directly the situation in the field so that the author can get a broader picture of the problem being researched.

Observation or observation is also very often used in scientific research, not just reviewing or looking around, but must be observed carefully and systematically in accordance with the guidelines that have been made. In this study, the researcher directly conducted a direct observation to the research location about the formation of social relations of State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul students.

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Interviews as a data collection technique are a little more difficult compared to giving questionnaires. Because in the interview it is necessary to dig deeper into the data, and it is necessary to maintain various aspects ranging from attitude, voice intonation when asking, facial expression, appearance and so on when doing the interview. An interview is a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by someone who plays the role of an interviewer and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in a group of students.

Documentation is very important in content analysis, because in the content analysis sources in written form remain the most important material. In the study of documents, if there is a mistake about the source of the data, it can still be double-checked, because the document is an inanimate object that will not change. In this study, the researcher documented the implementation of guidance and counseling activities at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul.

After the data being studied is collected, the next stage is to analyze the data. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from the results of interviews, field notes, and documentation, by organizing data into categories, describing them into units, synthesizing, organizing them into patterns, choosing which ones are important and what will be studied and making conclusions so that they are easy to understand by yourself and others. Data presentation and data verification (drawing conclusions) [\(Moleong, 2019\)](#).

The technique of checking the validity of data is very decisive for the quality of research results. In this case, to achieve what the researcher expects, data examination techniques are used that contain the researcher's efforts to obtain the validity of the data. Techniques to achieve the validity or credibility of data are carried out by triangulation. According to Sugiyono, the triangulation technique is a credibility test by checking data from various ways, sources and times. The triangulation technique used by the author in this study is a triangulation technique or a meaningful method to test the credibility of data is carried out by checking data to the same source with different techniques. For example, data is obtained by interviews, then checked with observation or documentation. If the data credibility testing technique produces the same data, then the data is credible, if it is different, then the researcher conducts further discussion with the data source. As well as the results of interviews are compared or checked with the results of observation and documentation [\(Moleong, 2019\)](#).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul**

The results of the research that the researcher has summarized are individual and group assistance, counseling guidance provides support to students both individually and in groups. They help students understand and adjust to changes in the curriculum, including providing guidance in choosing subjects that suit students' interests and potential. Character development and social skills, the guidance program at this school focuses on the development of students' character and

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social skills, which is in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. Activities such as group counseling, leadership training, and extracurricular activities help students develop skills that support independent learning and responsibility. Counseling to teachers and parents, counseling guidance also provides counseling to teachers and parents about the principles. Independent Curriculum and how to support students in their learning process. This helps create a cooperative learning environment and understands the needs of students holistically. Evaluation and feedback, counseling guidance periodically evaluates the effectiveness of curriculum implementation by collecting feedback from students and teachers. This allows for the adjustment of coaching strategies and methods to improve the quality of support provided.

### **Main Challenges Faced in the Counseling Guidance Process Untk Supports the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul**

The results of the research on the main challenges faced in the counseling guidance process in this study, the researcher concluded that the lack of understanding of the Independent Curriculum, one of the main challenges is the lack of a deep understanding of the Independent Curriculum among counseling guidance personnel. Some counseling guidance staff have not fully understood the principles of the new curriculum, which hinders their ability to provide appropriate guidance. Counseling guidance often faces limitations in terms of resources, such as adequate time and facilities. The lack of dedicated space for counseling sessions, as well as limited tools, limit the effectiveness of counseling guidance programs in supporting students to the fullest. With the Independent Curriculum, students' needs become more diverse and specific. Counseling staff face challenges in providing services that can meet the individual needs of students, especially when dealing with unique or complex problems. Some counseling guidance personnel may not have enough skills and knowledge to deal with the changes brought about by the Independent Curriculum. This includes skills in using guidance methods that are more adaptive and responsive to student needs. Limited support from schools, including principals and teachers, is a significant challenge. Without strong support from the entire school community, counseling guidance efforts to support curriculum implementation can become less effective. The evaluation process of the counseling guidance program implemented also faces challenges. There is a need for a more structured and organized assessment system in order to measure the impact and effectiveness of the guidance provided.

### **The Effectiveness of the Counseling Guidance Intervention Approach That Has Been Applied at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul in Supporting the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum**

The results of the research that have been researched concluded from the successful implementation of the Independent curriculum are that students report an increase in satisfaction related to the counseling guidance services received. Counseling guidance interventions that focus on developing study skills, time management, and academic planning help students adjust to the Independent Curriculum and feel better prepared for academic challenges. Individual counseling programs have proven to be effective in helping students with specific needs, such as learning difficulties and personal problems. This approach allows students to get attention and support

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tailored to their needs. Counseling guidance programs that integrate social and emotional skills training, such as communication skills and conflict resolution, support students in adapting to a more flexible learning environment. This is in line with the goal of the Independent Curriculum to develop non-academic aspects of students. Counseling guidance interventions involving collaboration between counseling guidance staff, teachers, and parents showed positive results. Effective communication between these parties helps in creating a supportive and cooperative learning environment. Although there are many positive aspects, some challenges are still faced, such as limited time for counseling sessions, limitations in training for counseling guidance staff, and lack of supporting facilities. This inhibits the capacity of counseling guidance in providing optimal interventions.

### **The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul**

The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul is very vital, especially when viewed from the perspective of Islamic concepts. In Islam, education is not only about the acquisition of knowledge, but also about the formation of strong character and morals. Therefore, counselors in this context have a great responsibility to ensure that students not only develop academically, but also morally and spiritually in accordance with the teachings of Islam.

In the Independent Curriculum that emphasizes the development of student independence and the formation of strong character, the contribution of counselors is very important. They not only assist students in facing academic challenges, but also provide moral and spiritual guidance in accordance with Islamic values ([Wiguna & Adi Nugraha Tristaningrat, 2022](#)). By utilizing a holistic approach to guidance and counseling, counselors can help students understand and internalize Islamic principles in their daily lives. This not only creates a more inclusive learning environment, but also helps students become responsible, empathetic, and noble individuals in accordance with the teachings of Islam ([Sulalah et al., 2024](#)). Thus, the role of Guidance and Counseling in Supporting the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul is not only a practical necessity, but also has deep significance in the context of Islamic education.

In the view of developmental psychology theory, as proposed by Erik Erikson, the role of guidance and counseling in education can be understood through the lens of psychosocial stages ([Shihab et al., 2023](#)). Erikson highlights the importance of identity formation during adolescence. In this context, the Counseling Guidance Teacher at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul can play a significant role in helping students explore and overcome their identity conflicts, which are an integral part of the adolescent developmental stage. By providing support and direction, Counseling Guidance Teachers assist students in bridging the gap between academic expectations and the exploration of their identity, helping them find meaning and purpose in their education.

In addition, ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner provides an important insight into how the social environment and family context affect student development. In this case, the Counseling Guidance Teacher not only acts as an individual providing guidance, but also as part



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of a network of systems that include families, schools, and communities. By understanding the interactions between these different systems, Counseling Guidance Teachers can more effectively assist students in navigating their academic and personal development challenges. Through collaboration with parents and other education stakeholders, Counseling Guidance Teachers can create an environment that supports and facilitates the holistic growth of students ([Nurhayati & PW. Nurfarida, 2018](#)).

Furthermore, the social cognitive theory introduced by Albert Bandura highlights the important role of other learning agents in individual development. In the context of education at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul, Counseling Guidance Teachers not only provide information and skills to students, but also act as a model that influences students' perceptions of themselves and their surroundings. Through interaction and direct observation, students can learn from Counseling Guidance Teachers on how to deal with challenges, manage emotions, and plan for their future. Thus, Counseling Guidance Teachers become important agents in the formation of students' social, emotional, and academic skills, in accordance with the demands of a curriculum that is responsive to individual development.

In the context of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul, the guidance and counseling program is the main instrument in adjusting learning to individual needs. By hosting individual counseling, students have the opportunity to talk about academic or personal challenges they face in a more personal way. Counseling Guidance Teachers can provide support tailored to each student's needs, help them identify effective solutions, and provide direction in planning steps to achieve their goals. Thus, the program not only assists students in improving their academic achievement but also provides meaningful mentoring in their personal development.

In addition, group activities such as social skills workshops and learning motivation seminars provide a platform for students to learn and grow together. Through social interaction in the context of learning, students can acquire the skills necessary to interact with others effectively, work together in teams, and overcome interpersonal conflicts. Meanwhile, learning motivation seminars help increase students' motivation and interest in learning, encourage them to explore their own interests, and set meaningful goals. By organizing these various activities, the guidance and counseling program at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul ensures that the education implemented does not only focus on academic achievement but also on the overall personal development of students.

In today's digital era, the integration of technology in guidance and counseling services provides a new dimension in supporting the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. Online counseling services allow students to access help without being constrained by time or physical location. With the online platform, students can easily contact the Counseling Guidance Teacher for individual or group counseling without the need to be physically present at the counseling office. This expands the accessibility of services for students who may have time constraints or geographic constraints, making the guidance and counseling approach more inclusive.

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In addition, the integration of technology also allows the use of innovative counseling methods, such as the solution-focused approach, which can provide students with the tools to actively seek solutions to the problems they face. By using technology as a medium, Counseling Guidance Teachers can convey strategies and suggestions in a more interactive and direct manner to students, facilitating a more effective problem-solving and decision-making process. Thus, the integration of technology in guidance and counseling services not only supports accessibility, but also enriches the student experience in undergoing the learning process and self-development ([Lestari, 2022](#)).

The role of a Counseling Guidance Teacher is not only limited to providing academic and emotional support to students, but also extends to mentoring in planning their educational and career futures. In this role, the Counseling Guidance Teacher acts as an important liaison between students, parents, and the school. By providing relevant and accurate information about a wide range of further education options and career opportunities, Counseling Guidance Teacher assists students in crafting clear and purposeful future plans ([Karlina, 2019](#)).

Concrete steps planned with Counseling Guidance Teachers help students identify their interests, talents, and needs, so they can make informed decisions regarding education and careers. Counseling Guidance Teachers also provide support and guidance throughout the decision-making process, helping students overcome any uncertainties and confusions they may face. Thus, the role of the Counseling Guidance Teacher as a facilitator in educational and career planning not only assists students in navigating the complexities of the world of education and work, but also increases their chances of achieving success in the future ([Nasution, 2021](#)).

The results of the evaluation of the guidance and counseling program at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul provide a positive picture of the effectiveness of the approach applied. It was found that this approach has had a significant positive impact, especially in three main aspects: learning motivation, student independence, and the quality of their social interactions. Through this program, students are not only provided with support in improving their academic achievement, but also assisted in developing skills that are essential for success in their personal and social lives. Increased motivation to learn is a prominent indicator of success of the program, where students begin to show a greater interest in learning and are more motivated to achieve their academic goals. In addition, the increase in students' independence shows that they become more confident in overcoming academic and personal challenges, and are more able to take initiative in solving problems.

Although the evaluation results show the positive impact of the guidance and counseling program, there are still challenges that need to be overcome in optimizing its role. Limited resources are one of the main obstacles, especially in the context of the time and number of teachers available to provide services to students. In addition, the resistance of some students and teachers to the role of guidance and counseling is also a challenge that needs to be overcome. To overcome this, efforts continue to be made by developing priority strategies, improving communication between all relevant stakeholders, and making optimal use of existing resources. Thus, these steps are expected to help in overcoming existing challenges and increasing the effectiveness of the guidance and counseling program at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul.

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With awareness of the importance of comprehensive support, the school is expected to be able to overcome existing challenges and provide better services to students. This will not only have an impact on improving students' academic achievement, but also help them in holistic personal development. Thus, collaborative efforts between all relevant parties, including teachers, guidance and counseling teachers, students, and parents, are crucial in addressing the challenges faced and improving the effectiveness of guidance and counseling programs.

Overall, the role of guidance and counseling at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul has made a significant contribution in supporting the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Through a variety of activities such as individual counseling, groups, workshops, and seminars, students have gained holistic support to overcome academic, social, and emotional challenges. A responsive approach to students' needs has brought about a positive impact that is seen in increasing their learning motivation, independence, and social interaction.

With this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that the future of education at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul will be brighter. Continuous efforts to improve the quality of guidance and counselling services, including through the integration of technology and increased cooperation between all stakeholders, will be key in ensuring that every student gets the support they need to reach their full potential. Thus, State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul can be an example for other schools in realizing an inclusive, empowered, and holistic development-oriented education for students.

### **Main Challenges Faced in the Counseling Guidance Process Untk Supports the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul**

The main challenges in the counseling guidance process to support the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul include several aspects that need serious attention. One of them is the limited resources, both in terms of the number of available counselors and supporting facilities. Although efforts have been made to provide holistic services, sometimes these limitations can hinder the effectiveness of guidance and counseling in reaching all students optimally. Innovative strategies are needed to address these challenges, such as additional training for teachers to provide guidance and counseling support to students, the use of technology to provide remote guidance and counseling services, and collaboration with external parties to expand access to needed resources and services. With these steps, it is hoped that guidance and counseling can become more inclusive and effective in helping students face various challenges that arise in the learning process.

In addition, the resistance of some students and teachers to the role of guidance and counseling is also a significant challenge. This may be due to a lack of understanding of the importance of these services in supporting holistic student development, or even stigma against the use of counseling services. Efforts to overcome this resistance require a comprehensive approach, including raising awareness of the benefits of guidance and counseling and building good relationships between students, teachers, and counselors. Educational programs are also needed that strengthen the understanding of the role of counseling in character formation and students' ability to manage

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personal and academic problems. Through collaboration between schools, parents, and the community, the stigma against guidance and counseling can be overcome, so that these services can be accepted and utilized more widely in an effort to improve the overall welfare of students ([Ifnaldi, 2021](#)).

Furthermore, the challenge of adapting to the needs and dynamics of each student is also a major concern. Each student has a different background, needs, and challenges, so it requires a personalized and diverse approach to guidance and counseling services. This requires the availability of adequate time, energy, and human resources to provide support that suits each individual's needs. In the context of the Independent Curriculum, where the learning approach is more focused on the needs and potentials of each student, the role of guidance and counseling is increasingly vital in helping students recognize, develop, and utilize their potential optimally. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to pay attention to this aspect and provide sufficient facilities and support for counselors to be able to provide services that suit the individual needs of each student ([Astuti et al., 2019](#)).

In addition, in the context of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes more independent and collaborative learning, guidance and counseling need to continue to adapt in order to provide relevant support. These challenges include developing counselling methods and strategies that are in line with the principles of the new curriculum as well as ensuring that students gain a good understanding of how guidance and counselling can support their learning process. It is also necessary to increase the capacity of counselors to understand and apply approaches that are in accordance with the philosophy and goals of the Independent Curriculum, including facilitating students in developing independent learning skills, problem-solving, and teamwork. Collaboration between teachers, counselors, and students is key in addressing these challenges, by ensuring that guidance and counselling are not only considered as additional services, but as an integral part of a holistic and ongoing learning experience ([Rahayu et al., 2023](#)).

Another challenge that needs to be overcome is related to the accessibility of guidance and counseling services, especially in terms of time and location availability. In situations where tight schedules and time constraints are constraints, it is important to look for innovative solutions, such as online counseling services or more flexible scheduling of counseling sessions. Thus, every student can access the services they need without being hampered by time or location constraints ([Ramlah, 2018](#)). These efforts not only allow students to get support whenever needed, but also expand the reach of guidance and counseling services to areas that may have previously been difficult to reach, such as rural areas or students with limited mobility. This is in line with the principle of inclusion in education, where every student has the right to receive services that suit their needs, regardless of geographical or time limitations.

Furthermore, the role of parents and the community in supporting the effectiveness of guidance and counseling is also an important factor but is often overlooked. The challenge of involving parents and the community in the guidance and counselling process requires further efforts in building awareness of the importance of their role and increasing collaboration between schools, parents, and the community ([Jumala, 2021](#)). Parents need to be given a better understanding of

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the benefits of guidance and counseling for their children's development, so that they can be active partners in supporting the learning and development process of students. In addition, it is necessary to make efforts to involve the community more broadly, such as through counseling programs or cooperation with institutions and organizations in the school environment. By actively involving parents and the community, guidance and counseling services can become more effective and integrated in an effort to improve student welfare and achievement holistically.

Another challenge is related to the evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of guidance and counseling services. A structured and continuous evaluation system is needed to measure the impact of these services on overall student development. This involves the development of valid and reliable evaluation instruments and a commitment to use evaluation data to improve service quality. A comprehensive evaluation can cover a variety of aspects, such as improving academic achievement, students' emotional and social well-being, and developing study and decision-making skills. Additionally, it is important to involve a variety of stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and counselors in the evaluation process, so as to gain a comprehensive perspective on the effectiveness of the service (Winkel & Hastuti, 2019). Thus, educational institutions can continue to make adjustments and improvements in an effort to provide optimal guidance and counseling services for students

In the face of these challenges, collaboration between all stakeholders is key. A joint effort between schools, teachers, counselors, parents, and the community can create an educational environment that supports the holistic development of students. Through open communication and close cooperation, each stakeholder can contribute to finding effective solutions to overcome various obstacles that may arise. For example, schools and counselors can work closely with parents to improve their understanding of the importance of guidance and counseling, while communities can provide additional support through support programs. With solid collaboration, the challenges faced in the implementation of guidance and counseling can be overcome more effectively, so that each student can reach their maximum potential in the learning and development process.

### **The Effectiveness of the Counseling Guidance Intervention Approach That Has Been Applied at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul in Supporting the Successful Implementation of the Independent Curriculum**

In facing various challenges related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul, the effectiveness of the counseling guidance intervention approach has proven itself as an important element in supporting the success of the curriculum. One of the outstanding findings was a significant increase in students' motivation to learn, independence, and the quality of their social interactions. This shows that the approach applied is able to have a real positive impact on student development.

The importance of the guidance and counseling approach in this context is reflected in the theories of guidance and counseling that emphasize holistic support for student development. By paying attention not only to academic aspects, but also to psychosocial and emotional aspects, this approach creates a supportive environment for students to grow and develop holistically. In the context of a curriculum that emphasizes the development of independence and social interaction,

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the role of counselors is crucial in helping students overcome various challenges and optimize their potential. Thus, the guidance and counseling approach is not just a supplement, but an integral part of the educational process that ensures the success of students in achieving the set learning goals ([Sopiansyah et al., 2022](#)).

The use of solution-focus methods and character-based learning approaches has provided a strong foundation in strengthening the effectiveness of counseling guidance interventions. The solution-focused method gives students the tools to actively seek solutions to the problems they face. With this approach, students are invited to focus on the solution rather than the problem itself, thus helping them develop a constructive mindset in facing challenges. This is in line with the principles of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes the development of student independence in solving daily problems ([Atika et al., 2019](#)).

In addition, the character-based learning approach is also an important component in strengthening the effectiveness of counseling guidance interventions. Through this approach, students are not only taught academic material, but are also given special attention to the development of positive attitudes and essential social skills. In the context of the Independent Curriculum that emphasizes the formation of character and moral values, this kind of learning approach helps students understand and internalize these values in daily life ([Nur Imansyah, 2023](#)).

The practical application of theories in guidance and counseling to support student development in the context of a more inclusive and character development-oriented curriculum is the right step. This is because this holistic approach not only helps students achieve good academic achievements, but also prepares them to become independent, responsible, and noble individuals. Thus, counseling guidance interventions based on solution-focused methods and character-based learning approaches can be considered as effective strategies in supporting broader educational goals.

The role of counselors in overcoming the challenges of resource limitations, resistance to services, and adjustment to curriculum principles is an important factor in determining the effectiveness of counseling guidance interventions. Counselors have a great responsibility to navigate these obstacles wisely and creatively. They must be able to use the resources available optimally, including time, effort, and facilities, to provide quality services to students ([Erford, 2017](#)).

In the face of resistance to services, counselors need to build strong relationships with students, teachers, and parents. The importance of an empathic approach and open communication is key in this process. Through an empathic approach, counselors can better understand the challenges and needs of the individuals they serve. Open communication also allows students to feel heard and fully supported in the counseling process. By building positive relationships and mutual trust, counselors can help students overcome barriers that may arise in receiving counseling help. Good relationships also allow counselors to work closely with teachers and parents to provide consistent and integrated support for students. Thus, a relationship-centered approach plays a crucial role in overcoming resistance to counseling guidance services ([Rambe et al., 2017](#)).

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In addition, counselors must also be able to adjust to the curriculum principles applied in schools. This involves a deep understanding of the goals and values that the curriculum seeks to achieve, as well as how counseling can contribute directly to the achievement of those goals. By having a strong understanding of the curriculum, counselors can develop counseling strategies and programs that are tailored to the needs of students and support the overall vision of the curriculum. In addition, counselors can also work closely with teachers and other school teachers to identify areas where counseling can make a significant contribution to achieving curriculum goals. Thus, a synergistic integration between counseling services and the principle of The curriculum not only increases the relevance of counseling interventions, but also strengthens their effectiveness in supporting the overall development of students.

Through leveraging their professional capacities and skills, counselors have successfully become a liaison between students, teachers, and parents in supporting the achievement of curriculum goals. With the knowledge and skills they have, counselors can act as facilitators who help bring together various elements of the school environment. They can build effective communication bridges between students, teachers, and parents, facilitating meaningful discussions and collaborations in support of students' academic, social, and emotional development (Folastri, 2019). Thus, the integration of the role of counselors in the learning process not only benefits students individually, but also creates a more responsive and inclusive learning environment overall. This is in line with the vision of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes the importance of strengthening cooperation between all stakeholders in creating a supportive learning environment for all students.

This is in line with research conducted by (Fauziah et al., 2022) The results of his research show that Guidance and Counseling teachers have an important role in success in school as an extension that can diagnose and identify the needs of students. Counseling Guidance Teachers are required to be skilled in optimizing learning effectiveness and improving the quality of education by using the most appropriate learning approaches/methods for students. The implementation of the independent learning curriculum is to become a relevant and targeted guideline and requires Counseling Guidance Teachers as the implementers of the independent learning curriculum to run effectively. Then the research conducted by (Hayati et al., 2022) Counseling Guidance Teacher has an important role, namely not only providing material but character education is also very important and useful for student behavior, in a way that teachers do not just provide material for free but can provide examples to students, so that students are able to be dedicated and innovate in the independent learning curriculum. Then the research conducted by (Hapni et al., 2024) The results of his research show that counseling guidance teachers play a role in implementing the independent curriculum in schools.

The roles of guidance and counseling teachers are: (a) as a counselor, (b) as a consultant, (c) as a coordinator, (d) as career development, and (e) as an assessor. Therefore, the conclusion is that counseling guidance teachers participate in the independent curriculum, especially facilitating the development and growth of students, developing talents, interests, and potentials that students have. The similar research is a study conducted by (Seprianto et al., 2024) The results of the research show that the strategy for developing counseling service materials in schools begins with

the initiation by school leaders by involving key stakeholders. The process of socializing the Independent Curriculum is carried out in stages, both in the school environment and to the general public through social media. The strategies implemented include the development of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), strengthening character education, the preparation of a one-page Counseling Service Implementation Plan, and the improvement of Computer Information and Technology competencies by Counseling Guidance Teachers. The strategy reflects the school's commitment to developing an inclusive and participatory approach to support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. And research conducted by ([Azwardinsyah et al., 2023](#)) The results of his research show that counseling guidance teachers at Sarolangun Regency Senior High School have a scientific background that is in accordance with their field and they have done their duties well and professionally. In carrying out their duties, counseling guidance teachers are always fully responsible for solving various student problems. Sarolangun Regency Senior High School counseling guidance teachers provide individual services to students in solving student learning problems so that various student learning problems can be solved well.

From the results of the comparison of previous research with this study, it can be concluded that guidance and counseling have an important role in supporting the successful implementation of the independent curriculum in schools. This is not far from its role in providing individual services to students in solving student learning problems so that various student learning problems can be solved well.

### CONCLUSION

Guidance and counseling play a central role in facilitating the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at State Junior High School 2 Dolok Masihul. affirms that group counseling significantly improves self-esteem and learning motivation among students from disjointed families. The findings suggest that structured counseling interventions create a supportive environment where students can connect with peers facing similar challenges, leading to positive psychological outcomes. The findings highlight the importance of implementing counseling services in educational settings to effectively support at-risk students and improve their overall academic and personal development. The theoretical and practical contributions in this study are as follows: These findings may contribute to existing counseling theories by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of group counseling particularly for students from disjointed families. While practical contribution: These findings serve as a resource for educators and school counselors, offering them insight into effective strategies for supporting at-risk students.

In this case, the limitations contained in this study are the limited sample size, which can affect the generalization of findings and only focus on short-term results after the counseling intervention. The long-term effects on self-esteem and motivation were not assessed, thus raising questions about the sustainability of improvement. Suggestions for further research are that expanding the sample size and including a more diverse population will increase the validity of the findings and allow comparisons across different demographics as well as consider a longitudinal design to



evaluate the long-term impact of group counseling on self-esteem and motivation, and assess whether the benefits are sustainable.

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