

Group Guidance Service: Discrepancies Between Standard and Actual Practice

Dian Ari Widyastuti¹, Edi Purwanta², Budi Astuti³

Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia¹

Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta,
Indonesia²

Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education,
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia³

E-mail: dian.widyastuti@bk.uad.ac.id¹, edi_purwanta@uny.ac.id²,
budi_astuti@uny.ac.id³

Correspondent Author: Dian Ari Widyastuti, dian.widyastuti@bk.uad.ac.id

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Abstrack

Group guidance services play a crucial role in developing students' potential, but their implementation often fails to conform to established standards. This study aims to evaluate the gap between the standards and actual practices of group guidance services in private junior high schools in Yogyakarta City. Using a mixed-methods approach with a discrepancy model, the study involved ten BK teachers who were selected through purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected through evaluation questionnaires and in-depth interviews, and then analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. The results showed that most BK teachers did not regularly carry out services and that these services were not based on a systematic needs assessment. Key findings suggest that structural barriers such as administrative burdens and the absence of schedules remain key factors. Recommendations include the need for needs assessment training, innovative service strategies, and the regular inclusion of special hours for BK services in the school curriculum.

Keywords: discrepancy model, guidance and counseling teacher, group guidance service

Abstrak

Layanan bimbingan kelompok memiliki peran penting dalam pengembangan potensi siswa, namun implementasinya sering tidak sesuai dengan standar yang ditetapkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi kesenjangan antara standar dan praktik aktual layanan bimbingan kelompok di SMP swasta Kota Yogyakarta. Menggunakan pendekatan mixed method dengan model evaluasi kesenjangan (discrepancy model), penelitian melibatkan sepuluh guru BK yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket evaluasi dan wawancara mendalam, kemudian dianalisis dengan statistik deskriptif dan analisis isi. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar guru BK tidak menjalankan layanan secara rutin dan tidak berdasarkan asesmen kebutuhan yang sistematis. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa hambatan struktural seperti beban administratif dan tidak adanya jadwal tetap menjadi faktor utama. Rekomendasi mencakup perlunya pelatihan asesmen kebutuhan, strategi layanan inovatif, serta penetapan jam khusus layanan BK secara rutin dalam kurikulum sekolah.

Keywords: model kesenjangan, guru bimbingan dan konseling, layanan bimbingan kelompok

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INTRODUCTION

Group guidance services are a vital component of guidance and counseling programs in schools, which are ideally implemented by established standards. This service aims to prevent students from experiencing problems and to help develop their potential. Group guidance services should be carried out systematically, starting with a needs assessment, planning, implementing interactive techniques, and documenting the evaluation. This standard is intended to ensure that services are effective and achieve their service objectives.

The implementation of group guidance according to procedures has a positive impact, supported by empirical evidence from various study results. For example, a study by Yusop et al. (2018) in Malaysia showed that elementary school students who participated in a seven-week group guidance program experienced a significant increase in their self-concept. Meanwhile, a study by Eskawati & Wangid (2023) found that the application of role-playing techniques in group guidance sessions significantly increased the self-efficacy of high school students. Another study found that students participating in group guidance services experienced a significant increase in self-confidence (Ibrahim & Farozin, 2020; Asradi & Sarman, 2022). In general, these findings support the notion that when implemented systematically and by established standards, group guidance can be an effective means of promoting students' psychosocial well-being and academic achievement.

However, various studies also reveal factual discrepancies between standards and actual practices in the school, which is the primary focus of this study. Guidance and counseling teachers often face obstacles such as time constraints, administrative burdens, a lack of professional training, and minimal institutional support, which ultimately lead to the implementation of services not by standard guidelines (Widyastuti, 2017; Widiadnyani et al., 2020; Arfasa & Weldmeskel, 2020). Although group guidance services can significantly develop students' potential, their implementation is not consistently carried out for all students (Suryani et al., 2024).

A study conducted by Da Costa (2016) added that the group guidance service process often ignores aspects of sustainability and documentation. Although there are positive results, most services lack a standard formative monitoring system. This finding aligns with the report by Buulolo & Telaumbanua (2024), which noted the positive impact of group guidance services, although without systematic documentation and evaluation. This suggests that group guidance services should be designed and evaluated with a professional approach, rather than being run improvisationally, depending on the experience and perceptions of each guidance and counseling teacher.

Several findings from the practice of implementing group guidance services require follow-up evaluation research. Moreover, in Yogyakarta City, there has never been a specific evaluation of group guidance services using the discrepancy model. Essentially, the assessment of group guidance service implementation is necessary to ensure accountability, as without systematic evaluation, mismatches between design and actual practice will persist (Bhakti et al., 2018). Data from previous studies show that there are still guidance and counseling teachers who provide group guidance services that are not aligned with standards (Da Costa, 2016; Widyastuti, 2017). Thus, it is expected to find fundamental discrepancies, such as service standards requiring structured, documented, and evaluative implementation, whereas in reality, guidance and counseling teachers tend



to improvise differently from the plan, with sporadic evaluations and minimal written documentation. This study was designed to empirically evaluate the types of discrepancies between actual practices and group guidance service standards, and to identify the factors that influence them. The findings of this study are expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to strengthen the implementation of quality group guidance services in schools.

METHOD

The study used a mixed-methods approach, with the type of evaluation research (discrepancy model). The discrepancy evaluation model has advantages over other evaluation models, particularly in the context of evaluating group guidance services. This model highlights explicitly discrepancies between established standards and actual implementation, allowing for more targeted identification of areas for improvement. In professional standards-based group guidance services, this approach provides a more targeted evaluation framework than other models. The discrepancy model is effective in assessing the conformity of program implementation to standards because it allows for a clear evaluative focus on the achievement of key indicators (Nuha et al., 2024). Furthermore, discrepancy-based evaluation also facilitates more strategic decision-making for continuous program improvement.

This discrepancy model includes: 1) agreement on specific standards, 2) determining whether or not there are discrepancies between performance and several aspects of the program and the standard tools for that performance, and 3) using information about the discrepancies to decide to develop the program, continue the program, or stop part or all of the program. Evaluation of the discrepancies model group guidance service, using standards and criteria from the Guidelines for Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). This evaluation is based on standard 1, "The professional school counselor implements the Guidance Curriculum Component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions for all students," and criterion 1, "The professional school counselor teaches guidance units effectively" (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). These criteria are described in terms of assessment criteria, including those that are by standards, close to standards, and far from standards. In more detail, these criteria are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Assessment Criteria in Group Guidance Service Evaluation

No	Behavior	Keterangan
1.	Comply with the standards	80-100% implemented
2.	Partially comply with the standards	66-79% implemented
3.	Fail to comply with the standards	Less then 66% implemented

The participants in this study were ten guidance and counseling teachers of private junior high schools in Yogyakarta City, Indonesia, who were selected using purposive



sampling techniques. The ten guidance and counseling teachers each came from different schools, specifically ten private junior high schools in Yogyakarta City, Indonesia. The selection of participants was based on the consideration that they represent guidance and counseling teachers implementing group guidance services in private schools, which have dynamics different from those in public schools, particularly in terms of internal policies, student populations, and the workload of guidance and counseling teachers. Ten participants were deemed sufficient for a qualitative approach in a mixed-methods design, as the primary focus was on obtaining in-depth data rather than statistical generalizations. Furthermore, the involvement of teachers from ten different schools provided variation that could enrich the findings. The data collection technique used a group guidance service evaluation questionnaire and in-depth interviews.

Data analysis in this study used descriptive statistical analysis for quantitative data and content analysis for qualitative data. The use of mixed methods was employed in an integrative manner, where quantitative and qualitative data were not only presented separately but also complemented each other to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the object being studied. Data integration was carried out in stages (sequential integration), starting with descriptive statistical analysis of quantitative results to determine the general trend of service outcomes, which was then deepened through content analysis of qualitative data from interviews. The results of the quantitative analysis provide a numerical representation of the conformity of services to standards. At the same time, the qualitative data offer context and explanations for the factors influencing these findings. Thus, both types of data complement each other in fully answering the research objectives and strengthening the validity of the findings through a triangulation approach of sources and methods.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are four main stages in this discrepancy model evaluation research: the definition stage, the installation stage, the process stage, and the result stage. At the definition stage, the evaluation objective has been determined, namely, to identify the discrepancies in group guidance services between the established standards and actual practices in schools. The source of information was obtained through evaluation questionnaires and in-depth interviews, while the participants were private junior high school guidance and counseling teachers in Yogyakarta City.

At the installation stage, the focus was on developing evaluation instruments. The instruments in question were evaluation questionnaires and interview guidelines. Both the evaluation questionnaire and interview guidelines were developed based on Standard 1, Criterion 1 of the Guidelines for Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008). The evaluation questionnaire contains 62 statement items with three alternative answer choices: 1, "by standards"; 2, "approaching standards"; and 3, "far from standards". This instrument was developed based on seven indicators from the first criterion and the first standard. Previously, the instrument underwent an expert judgment process to ensure it met the validity aspect of the instrument. Meanwhile, the interview guidelines contain seven open-ended questions that participants must answer.



At the process stage, data were collected from ten guidance and counseling teachers. This data collection was conducted over two weeks. The results of filling out the questionnaire are summarized in Figure 1 below.

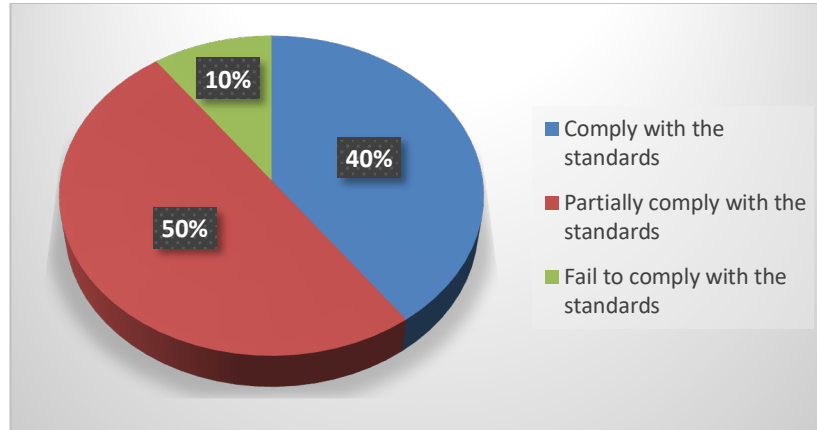


Figure 1. Group Guidance Service Evaluation Questionnaire Results

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that only 10% of participants implemented group guidance services due to non-compliance with the standards. The results of filling out the group guidance service evaluation questionnaire were followed up with in-depth interviews with ten junior high school guidance and counseling teachers in Yogyakarta City. Data from in-depth interviews were used as comparative data or supporting data. A summary of the results from in-depth interviews is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
 In-depth Interview Results Summary

Standard 1	Criterion 1	Indicator	Actual Practice	Participant Code
The professional school counselor implements the Guidance Curriculum Component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions for all students (Missouri Department of	The professional school counselor teaches guidance units effectively (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008)	Organizes units for student mastery based on student needs	Group guidance services are implemented in accordance with a program that is prepared based on a routine needs assessment every year.	C1, C2, C3, C5, C7
			Group guidance services are implemented according to the program, but are not based on the results of a needs assessment (the program is the	C4, C6, C8, C9



Standard 1	Criterion 1	Indicator	Actual Practice	Participant Code	
Elementary and Secondary Education, 2008)			same from year to year, without re-conducting a needs assessment).		
			Group guidance services are carried out incidentally, not according to the program, and not based on the results of a needs assessment.	C10	
			Conformity between structured plans and actual practice	Group guidance services are carried out in accordance with the group guidance service implementation plan, including the duration and stages.	C1, C2
			Group guidance services are carried out in accordance with the group guidance service implementation plan, although sometimes guidance and counseling teachers improvise activities in the service process.	C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9	
			Group guidance services are not	C10	



Standard 1	Criterion 1	Indicator	Actual Practice	Participant Code
			carried out in accordance with the group guidance service implementation plan	
		Have a regular schedule for implementing group guidance services	Group guidance services are carried out routinely every week.	C2
			Group guidance services are held 1-2 times a month.	C1, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9
			Group guidance services are not regularly scheduled	C10
		Uses effective strategies	Group guidance services use various techniques (problem solving, games, sociodrama, psychodrama, homeroom, etc.)	C1, C2, C5, C7
			Group guidance services often use expository or discussion techniques only.	C4, C6, C8, C9, C10
			Group guidance services are conducted using expository techniques only.	C3
		Establishes a conducive environment for student through effective	Can manage group dynamics and often use ice breaking to create a friendly atmosphere	C1, C2, C4, C5, C7, C8, C9



Standard 1	Criterion 1	Indicator	Actual Practice	Participant Code
		group dynamics	Can manage group dynamics but rarely uses ice breaking to create a friendly atmosphere	C3, C6, C10
			Difficulty managing group dynamics	-
		Using media in providing group guidance services	Using a variety of group guidance service media, including game media and digital-based media	C1, C2, C5, C7, C9
			Using media but only powerpoint and video	C3, C4, C6, C8, C10
			Using media only in the form of powerpoint	C3
		Carry out evaluations and prepare reports	Carry out evaluation after service implementation and prepare reports	C1, C2, C5
			Carrying out evaluation after service implementation but not compiling a report	C3, C4, C6, C7, C8
			Rarely carry out evaluations after service implementation and do not prepare reports	C9, C10

The results stage focuses on analyzing data that ultimately leads to conclusions. At this stage, technical triangulation is conducted to ensure the validity of the data collected during the evaluation research process. Technical triangulation emphasizes the



combination of data obtained from filling out questionnaires and data from in-depth interviews. The results of technical triangulation indicate that the data obtained from both data collection techniques are relevant, and the evaluation research results support the validity of the data. In more detail, the results of this discrepancy model evaluation research are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
 Summary of Evaluation Results of Group Guidance Service (Discrepancy Model)

Standards	Actual Practice
1. Organizes units for student mastery based on student needs	As many as 50% of guidance and counseling teachers carry out group guidance services in accordance with the established standards, the rest are close to the standard or far from the standard.
2. Conformity between structured plans and actual practice	Only 20% of guidance and counseling teachers implement group guidance services in accordance with the Service Implementation Plan. The rest of the teachers sometimes improvise or reduce the steps of activities that should be carried out.
3. Have a regular schedule for implementing group guidance services	Only 10% of guidance and counseling teachers carry out group guidance services routinely every week. The rest only 1-2 times a month or even cannot be sure to carry out every month.
4. Uses effective strategies	As much as 40% of guidance and counseling teachers implement group guidance services with various techniques. The rest only predominantly use expository techniques or regular group discussions.
5. Establishes a conducive environment for student through effective group dynamics	As many as 70% of guidance and counseling teachers are able to manage group dynamics during the group guidance service process and utilize ice breaking as a means to foster familiarity among group members.
6. Using media in providing group guidance services	As much as 50% of guidance and counseling teachers can use various media, both digital and non-digital. The rest of guidance and counseling teachers only rely on the use of powerpoint or video.
7. Carry out evaluations and prepare reports	Only 30% of guidance and counseling teachers routinely conduct post-implementation evaluations of group guidance services and compile reports on the results. The rest of guidance and counseling teachers conduct evaluations but do not compile reports.

The study's results revealed a discrepancy between the standards for implementing group guidance services and actual practices in schools. As many as 50% of BK teachers who implement services are based on student needs assessments. This indicates a low internalization of the principle of student needs in program planning. In fact, according



to Brewington & Kushner (2020), needs assessment is an essential foundation in guidance programs because it enables the identification of specific issues faced by students within the socio-cultural context of each school.

Several inhibiting factors identified from in-depth interviews include time constraints, high administrative burdens, lack of professional training, and minimal systemic support from the school. Guidance and counseling teachers tend to be trapped in administrative roles, such as filling out reports or being involved in other school tasks that are not the primary function of guidance and counseling, as seen in the following narrative:

"We often neglect our primary role as guidance and counseling teachers, which is to provide services to students. Instead, we engage in more administrative activities (C2)."

"Kami sering mengabaikan peran utama kami sebagai guru bimbingan dan konseling, yaitu memberikan pelayanan kepada siswa. Sebaliknya, kami terlibat dalam lebih banyak kegiatan administratif (C2)."

Role overload and unclear institutional expectations of the role of guidance and counseling teachers are the leading causes of the low implementation of needs-based services (Gallo, 2018; Rausch & Gallo, 2021).

This phenomenon can be explained through role theory in guidance and counseling, specifically the mismatch between role expectations and work reality, which creates role conflict and role overload (Hamelin et al., 2023). In this context, guidance and counseling teachers experience role conflict between their ideal duties as professional counselors and the administrative demands of the school. In addition, the lack of training in needs assessment is also an obstacle, where guidance and counseling teachers feel they are not competent enough to prepare assessment instruments or analyze the results systematically. Guidance and counseling teachers, when conducting needs assessments, only rely on existing instruments so that the results of the needs analysis cannot develop in a more specific direction, as seen in the following narrative:

"I rely solely on existing instruments such as the Developmental Task Inventory, the Problem Checklist, or the Student Needs Analysis instrument. I usually only use one instrument at a time, without combining several (C5)."

"Saya hanya mengandalkan instrumen yang ada seperti Developmental Task Inventory, Problem Checklist, atau instrumen Student Needs Analysis. Saya biasanya hanya menggunakan satu instrumen pada satu waktu, tanpa menggabungkan beberapa (C5)."

Meanwhile, only 20% of teachers strictly follow the implementation plan for group guidance services. The rest tend to improvise or reduce the number of service stages. This phenomenon shows an inconsistency in technical implementation, which is contrary to the principle of fidelity of implementation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). When interventions are not implemented as designed, service effectiveness can decrease drastically. In the context of education, fidelity not only reflects technical compliance but also the professional integrity of guidance and counseling teachers in maintaining service quality (Gage et al., 2020; Dolcini et al., 2021).



The low quality of planning often leads to a mismatch between service implementation plans and actual practices, which fail to meet students' real needs, and a weak internal monitoring system in schools. Many guidance and counseling teachers use service implementation plans that are repetitive from year to year, without adjusting them to meet the changing needs of students. In addition, the absence of regular supervision also causes guidance and counseling teachers not to feel motivated to carry out services consistently according to plan. This is reinforced by research by Zyromski et al. (2018), which found that the absence of a structured supervision system led guidance and counseling teachers to rely more on personal experience than systematic plans, thereby triggering a shift between service design and implementation in the field.

The regularity of service implementation is also an issue. Only 10% of teachers carry out services routinely every week, while the rest do it once or twice a month or on an unscheduled basis. The lack of a fixed schedule can have implications for the uncertainty of service access for students. The literature shows that the sustainability of structured group guidance services is positively correlated with increased student emotional well-being and strengthening social relationships (Defrianti et al., 2024; Kurniadi & Farozin, 2020). This irregularity may be attributed to the high workload of teachers and a lack of institutional support, as reported in Gallo's (2018) study on the administrative burden faced by guidance and counseling teachers.

Based on the results of in-depth interviews, one of the factors inhibiting guidance and counseling teachers from implementing group guidance services is the absence of special hours for guidance and counseling services in class, which are not routinely held every week. Some guidance and counseling teachers implement extensive group guidance services by requesting the subject teacher's schedule, which hampers comprehensive group guidance services that should be available to all students. Meanwhile, several other teachers stated that the absence of a special schedule for guidance and counseling services in class could make them more creative in providing small group guidance services that are more interesting and with more flexible time.

In terms of service strategies, only 40% of teachers use various techniques, such as sociodrama and psychodrama. The rest still rely on lectures or regular discussions. The use of monotonous techniques can limit active student participation, while creative approaches are more effective in increasing student engagement and psychosocial outcomes (Sandilos et al., 2021). In group guidance services, the selection of varied methods also allows for adjustments to students' diverse learning styles (Barkley et al., 2014).

One of the main inhibiting factors in implementing various techniques is the limited practical training that guidance and counseling teachers receive in mastering interactive techniques. Many guidance and counseling teachers do not receive comprehensive training regarding innovative methods in group guidance sessions. According to Mulawarman et al. (2020), limited access to practical training is a common obstacle in the adoption of innovative group guidance service strategies in schools. Additionally, a lack of confidence in using non-conventional techniques is another obstacle. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of applicable technical guidance and limited resources (time, space, tools) that support the optimal implementation of creative techniques in group services.



The aspect that showed relatively good results was the management of group dynamics, where 70% of teachers were able to create a conducive atmosphere through ice breaking. Group dynamics are a key component in the success of group guidance, as they facilitate social cohesion, openness, and collaboration among members (Gladding, 2016). However, the use of group guidance services media is still limited. Only half of the guidance and counselling teachers use digital media or games. Technology integration in tutoring has been shown to enhance student engagement and improve the effectiveness of group guidance services (Risqiyain & Purwanta, 2019; Salam et al., 2019; Halqim, 2024).

Guidance and counseling teachers emphasized that the teacher's ability to use game or roleplay techniques received a positive response from the majority of students. Students were interested in participating in services and were actively involved during the service process through game or roleplay techniques (drama-based). Group dynamics were built very easily. However, the limited game tools and roleplay implementation guidelines were inhibiting factors in implementing this innovative strategy for students. Guidance and counseling teachers also hope that there will be a guide for group guidance services that integrates cultural values or values based on the teachings of inspirational figures, as seen in the following narrative:

"Currently, there are several people who are developing guidance and counseling service guidebooks that contain certain values, for example, the values of Punakawan, the values of Ki Hajar Dewantara, etc. I am very interested in having such a guidebook, especially if the values are relevant to the lives or culture of students (C3)."

"Saat ini, ada beberapa orang yang sedang mengembangkan buku panduan layanan bimbingan dan konseling yang mengandung nilai-nilai tertentu, misalnya nilai-nilai Punakawan, nilai-nilai Ki Hajar Dewantara, dll. Saya sangat tertarik untuk memiliki buku panduan seperti itu, terutama jika nilai-nilai tersebut relevan dengan kehidupan atau budaya siswa (C3)."

Finally, only 30% of teachers routinely carried out evaluations and prepared service reports. This is a serious concern because, without systematic evaluation, guidance, and counseling, teachers cannot measure achievements and make service improvements. According to ASCA (American School Counselor Association), service evaluation is a form of accountability and professionalism (Geesa et al., 2019). A lack of documentation can also impact the difficulty of advocating for the importance of guidance services in schools (Boit, 2016; Owens, 2019).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms significant discrepancies between professionally established group guidance service standards and the actual practices of guidance and counseling teachers in private junior high schools in Yogyakarta City. These discrepancies encompass aspects of needs-based planning, regular service schedules, a variety of techniques and media used, and implementation of service evaluations. These findings demonstrate the importance of improving the professional capacity of guidance and counseling teachers, particularly in implementing group guidance services systematically, documented, and in accordance with standards.



However, this study has several limitations that warrant consideration. First, the limited number of participants (only ten teachers from private schools) and the study's location, which only included private junior high schools in Yogyakarta, limit the generalizability of the results to broader contexts, such as public schools or other regions. Second, data collection was limited to the perspectives of guidance and counseling teachers, excluding other stakeholders such as principals and students who are the recipients of these services. These limitations may reduce the depth of understanding of the overall context of service implementation.

As a follow-up, future research is recommended to expand the scope of participants to include guidance and counseling teachers from public schools and various geographically and culturally diverse regions. Furthermore, further research could explore the role of school organizational factors (such as principal leadership, school policies, and work climate) in supporting or hindering the implementation of group guidance services. Future researchers could also develop a technology-based professional training model specifically designed to enhance guidance counselors' competency in designing and implementing group guidance services by established standards.

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