

Barriers to Help-Seeking Behavior towards Counseling in Chinese Students

Gunawan Gunawan*, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto, Sugiyo Sugiyo, Sunawan Sunawan

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: gunawan020468@gmail.com

Abstract. Counseling help-seeking behavior as an effort to solve personal-social problems is influenced by the cultural values of an ethnic group. The purpose of this study was to analyze the barriers to help-seeking behavior in school counseling services for students of Arab, Chinese and Javanese ethnicity in Surakarta. The research method is quasi-qualitative with an ethnographic approach. The instruments used were virtual and in-depth interview guidelines. The research source used 15 Thionghoa participants. Retrieval of data with in-depth interview techniques. Data were analyzed using Qualitative Data Analysis with the NVivo12 application.

There are four main themes as a result of data analysis. The results showed that the Chinese ethnicity was influenced by a culture of collectivity and independence.

The implication of this research is that in order to improve counseling help-seeking behavior, a counselor needs to understand the cultural values of each learner.

Keywords: Counseling Help-seeking behavior, Chinese

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling services are important for students because many of them experience academic problems, learning disabilities and exam pressure (Qadeer et al., 2019). Research shows that as many as 2.5% of children, 4-8.3% of adolescents suffer from depression, 20-40% of adolescents experience severe depression to sweet depression. As many as 58.4% of adolescents experience mental health problems (Reddy., 2017). Self-concealment behavior has a positive correlation with psychological difficulties (Yang,t., al, 2016). In Slovenia, 52.50% of the young people in the research sample experience psychological problems (Roskar.et al., 2017). Ignoring life's problems and mishandling results in mal-adjustment behaviors (Santrock, 2007; Heath et.,al 2016). Counseling assistance for these problems will be of optimal use if it is based on student volunteerism with full awareness of seeking help from a school counselor to help solve the problem (Yusuf, 2010). This confirms that students' help-seeking behavior towards counseling services is important to develop. Research proves that help-seeking counseling behavior can improve mental health, reduce stress, solve personal problems, raise awareness of personal growth, happiness, increase self-confidence (Vidourek et al., 2014). Individuals experience significant progress after carrying out counseling help-seeking behavior. WHO (2017) noted, the benefits of help-seeking behavior for

normative development needs, and help-seeking related to personal problems and pressures. Counseling help-seeking behavior reduces the tendency for suicidal behavior (McDermott et al., 2017). The process of helping-seeking behavior with professional adults can develop self-confidence and improve the process of changing habits (Aubut et al., 2021). Counseling with professionals can help solve emotional problems rather than solving them alone (Picco et al., 2016). Irish youth feel the presence of counselors in helping develop their adolescent development (Cassells..2019). These findings indicate that help-seeking counseling behavior towards professional assistance provides important benefits for society, especially students.

Unfortunately, the behavior of seeking help in counseling is not universal because it is influenced by cultural and social norms of counselees. (Seamark, , 2018). American student culture has less self- and general stigma and more self-efficacy, trust in mental health professional groups and a desire to seek help compared to students in Japan (Yamawaki. & ,Green..2020). Research shows that sources of help-seeking behavior are dominated by informal sources in the form of family (Price.. & Daglish..2013). The process of acculturation of Asian students in America has an impact on their help-seeking behavior which indicates that they have an interest in help-seeking behavior towards mental health services (Han. & pong., 2017). Asian American students show that 65.2% have a desire to seek mental health services (Han. &

Pong.,2015). As many as 17% of African American adolescents need the help of professional counselors (Mesidor. & Sly.,2014). In fact, only 3.2% of African Americans seek mental health counseling when experiencing anxiety, depression and mental stress (Isacco. et al.,2016). The various studies above confirm that there are differences in American, European, African and Asian societies in responding to counseling assistance, where American and European communities are more open to help-seeking behavior. But in other Asian societies, not all have a need for counseling services. Research on Jordanian students showed that $r=0.168$ had no significant correlation between the level of depression and the desire to seek help. (Aldalaykeh et al., 2019). There is a very small correlation coefficient of $r = -0.09$ between gender and attitudes towards help-seeking behavior of professional assistance (Rayan & Jaradat, 2016). Research on Chinese students shows resistance to help-seeking behavior of professional psychological assistance (Haiping & Yan, 2017). This shows that people in Asian countries are more closed to counseling services. Help-seeking research to date has been carried out in Asia, America in developed countries, where they are immigrants. Therefore, help-seeking research needs to be carried out in the context of Asian communities in their own region.

Chinese society has Confucian traditions, ideologies, traditions, views on life that are in contrast to Pakistan as part of the Arab ethnicity (Rose, 2013; Zhu, 2017). Chinese society has 56 ethnicities (Yin & Approach, n.d. 2014). Chinese immigrants in Canada show that 21% of Chinese cultural values and beliefs differentiate attitudes towards help-seeking behavior (Tieu.& Konneert.,2013) This fact indicates the need for research on help-seeking counseling behavior on ethnics and crocodiles in Asia. Therefore understanding the determinants of counseling help-seeking behavior from the three ethnicities is interesting and important to study.

Counseling help-seeking behavior is influenced by many factors, one of which is cultural factors. Individuals feel ashamed of behaving in help-seeking counseling, because there is a value held by the family that problems are sufficiently kept in the family alone (Eigenhuis et al., 2021). When students carry out help-seeking counseling behavior, they will receive rejection and ridicule from the fact that the group has weaknesses, so they must seek

counseling assistance (Lynch et al., 2018). Nepalese people believe in the values that develop in society, namely visiting traditional healers when experiencing mental health problems, but this belief does not produce any results, so that the community remains sympathetic towards the facilitators of basic mental health services (Devkota et al., 2021). This shows that counseling help-seeking behavior is also influenced by the existence of a personal or social values that are adhered to by a particular community culture.

Chinese adolescents rationally know that when faced with a problem it is better to seek professional psychological help, but they emotionally have a rejection of this related to personal stigma and social norms, subjective norms related to one's independence affect the depth of attitude towards help-seeking behavior (Wang & , Xia, 2017). Alternative groups come from family members or friends 21.8%, religious people 16.9%, and help themselves by using books 8.9%. From this professional group came 2.3% psychiatrists, 17.5% doctors, 12.8% clinical psychologists, 12.0% social workers or counselors (Sun, 2017). This shows that Chinese people believe more in alternative professional groups than professional groups according to competence. Ethnicity significantly influences the intention to seek professional help (Chakawa. & Shapiro.,2021). Likewise, research on Chinese immigrants in Canada shows that as much as 21% of Chinese cultural values and beliefs differentiate attitudes towards help-seeking behavior (Tieu., & Konnert.,2013). From these various studies, it shows that most ethnic Chinese people do not use professional groups in solving their personal problems, they trust their potential and alternative groups more.

Help-seeking behavior for normative development needs, including help in completing school, or help related to vocational orientation/training, or employment-seeking, relationship formation and concerns, understanding the change associated with sexuality or puberty; and or other concerns that are frequently associated with adolescence (WHO, 2007)

Help-seeking behavior occurs when individuals cannot solve the problems they face on their own. Problem solving behavior or problem solving is finding solutions to specific problems that clients face without being able to solve them themselves (McLeod., 2013: 10). For Marsha Linehan, problem solving is a method of

behavior therapy (Prochaska & Norcross., 2010). People who seek counseling help are considered to actively find ways to overcome their problems together (McLeod., 2013).

Locke, (1998), Paniagua (1998), W. Sue (2001), noted that many mental health workers think that ethnic and racial factors are obstacles to therapy (David, 2008). Misunderstandings arising from cultural differences in communication lead to alienation and an inability to develop trust and rapport. Cultural clashes often occur between counseling values and the values of culturally diverse groups. Sue revealed that culture influences the behavior of seeking help (2008:159). Chinese people, they seek help with conditions of psychological disorders that are already severe enough to reach psychosomatic complaints. He will seek psychiatric help if he is in an area where the problem is extraordinarily severe, as a result, the disorder will get worse (Sue, 2008: 159). This shows that the factor that keeps students from doing help-seeking behavior is the presence of negative stigma considered as a mentally ill child. From the exposure that comes from different ethnicities, it has determinant factors of different counseling help-seeking behavior, especially those that come from different cultures.

METHODS

Research design

The research design in this study used quasi-qualitative research with ethnographic forms. The research steps were: a) conducting interviews, 2) entering interview results in a transcript according to the problem under study, 3) importing transcript data into NVivo 12, 4) coding using Nvivo 5) visualizing Nvivo data.

Participant

Chinese ethnic participants 15 students consisting of 10 girls and 5 boys

Data Collection and Analysis

The techniques used are direct interview and video call (VC) techniques, this is due to the Covid-19 health protocol, which includes not allowing gatherings. Qualitative research data can be collected in-depth interviews, focus group interviews).

Research Instruments

What factors influenced you to carry out help-seeking behavior in counseling students of, Chinese ethnicity?

Data processing and analysis in this research uses the NVivo 12 application.

The research instrument was the researcher herself, by preparing an open interview guide on counseling help-seeking behavior in the form of a list of questions containing questions to assist in conducting help-seeking behavior interviews. The instrument validity test was carried out using a source triangulation approach, namely students and teachers, credibility test (internal validity), transferability test (external validity), dependability test (reliability) and objectivity test (confirmability).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first trust problem is distrust of the Counselor. The ability of the counselor is related to the competence of the counselor both professional competence and personality affecting the client's trust in the counselor. The form of professional competence of a counselor is evidenced by the knowledge, skills and attitudes as a counselor according to official duties. The tendency of Chinese students is not to seek counseling help, because they trust their families more. For the Chinese people, they are a pragmatic, rational, independent society. So that counseling with counselors carries the risk of being disseminated to teachers. Therefore, they are more comfortable with peers, as expressed by 2 informants as follows.

I-14 : I'm still unsure about building a psychological relationship with the counseling teacher, so it's not certain that the advice given is right, I'm more comfortable telling stories with my family, because it's the parents' families who meet every day, who understand deeply about me, so they know the right solution.

The second problem of trust is self-confidence in counseling to a counselor. Counseling is an interview process between the counselor and the counselee. The interview requires a skill to communicate verbally with the counselor. The content of verbal communication can be in the form of self-disclosure, self-disclosure about what is being experienced, self-disclosure of psychological dynamics that occur openly, details, responding correctly to conclusions, stimuli created by the counselor, analyzing alternative problem solving offered by the

counselor, making decisions conforming to oneself and expressing the ability to change before the counselor requires self-confidence. Confidence that having the ability to communicate verbally will make it easier for counselors to create more effective counseling.

I : Lack of self-confidence, fear of the counselor, the family will know, because if you know the family will be ostracized by the family

Negative stigma about counseling

Negative stigma towards counseling behavior comes from several things. Individuals have a tendency not to do counseling, because they see that if there are students doing counseling then most people give a negative label to students who are counseling with counseling teachers from fellow students, teachers and their own parents. They consider counseling with a counselor to indicate that students are experiencing a problem. The word "problem" always has a negative connotation. Negative labels as naughty children, bad behavior, destructive experiencing psychological deviations.

As expressed by the following participants:

I-2: there is a stigma when counseling to a counselor is considered crazy, as well as counseling dealing with children who are naughty, truant, and wayward.

I-14 : people who enter BK are people who have problems.

Second, stigma also comes from negative self-perceptions of counseling behavior. The Chinese community considers that all information related to the family is inappropriate to convey to other people, including counselors. The Chinese people adhere to a sense of kinship and maintain dignity down to the family boundary. However, for Chinese families who still adhere to family traditions, they think that any negative information is a family disgrace that must be protected and not spread to other people outside the family. Therefore students do not do counseling because it is considered that they will open up the family's disgrace to the counselor, according to the informant's opinion

I-7: there are provisions in the family, family problems may not be shared with other people, just one family is enough, don't go out anywhere, why are problems being exposed

Negative Feelings in the Counselor

Some negative feelings towards counseling (1) shame with the counselor, (2) worry that the case will widen (3) feelings as a minority.

The first negative feeling is embarrassment to show his negative self known to others. Feelings of shame also indicate a state of self-feeling inferior, a feeling of being inappropriate, a state of being inferior and assuming the counselor is superior. This situation results in a person not having confidence in himself to interact with other people, including counselors. Some students conveyed reasons why they did not receive counseling when they had problems both personal, social, learning and career, namely a feeling of shame, as conveyed by informants 1, 7 as follows,

I-1 : If we solve it ourselves, then we don't go to the counselor, besides that there are feelings of shame and embarrassment with the counselor because we don't feel close enough.

The second negative feeling of anxiety is spreading everywhere. Clients have taken the risk of being open in counseling in the hope that the process and results of counseling are only known to the counselor and are confidential. There is concern that the personal secrets of other counselees will be disseminated by the teacher and homeroom teacher which results in the involvement of student affairs interfering and problems spreading everywhere, so that informants feel anxious when this happens to themselves when counseling with counselors, such as the answer of informant 9,

I-9 : I didn't go to the counselor, I was afraid I would say the wrong thing, I thought it was a fight then it reached the students, I have to be honest, the problem has widened

The third negative feeling is the feeling of minority. The Chinese group in Indonesia is a minority group. The feeling of being a member of the Chinese community is a minority group, and this creates personal pressure and discomfort. As a result of this discomfort it creates difficulties of psychological closeness with native counselors. so that there are students who feel a minority and when they are members of a minority group, what they do is just accept the position they are in, they don't dare to seek counselor counseling help.

Based on interviews with informants 1.

I-1 : yes how about...just not close enough...there is a minority feeling,

The fourth negative feeling is the fear of being ostracized by the family. There are families who consider the existence of a positive counseling teacher because it provides information about the development of students, but other families consider the counseling teacher as a source of information about the negative development of students. When the family is involved by the counseling teacher to solve common problems faced by students, it creates a perception of family disgrace to be exposed, even though in the Chinese tradition the family has loyalty to uphold the good name of the extended family, therefore when counseling with the counselor and the problem spreads to the parents then the extended family became aware which resulted in being ostracized from the extended family, this was revealed by the informant

I-2 : because they don't trust the counselor and are afraid of the counselor, the family will know, because if they know they will be ostracized by the family.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the barriers to counselor counseling help-seeking behavior that occur in students from the Chinese culture. In Surakarta there are several different ethnicities that live together in a community. Some of the obstacles in counseling help-seeking behavior in this study are problems of trust in counselors, negative stigma towards counseling students, and negative feelings towards counseling activities.

Based on the interviews, it was found that trust in the counselor inhibited counseling help-seeking behavior. Several informants did not believe in the counselor's professional competence in solving problems and keeping the counselee's secrets. From Thionghoa they trust religious leaders, parents, psychologists and friends more than counselors.

Previous research stated that family members only want personal problems to be known (Topkaya, 2015). Teenagers trust more informal sources (Bundock. et al ., , 2018; Schwank. et al, 2020). Not believing in the competence of the counselor (Yelpaze,& Ceyhan,,2019, Schwank. et al ., 2020)). Trust in counseling with counselors is only limited to problems related to this school (Bentil., 2015, Yamawaki.,2020).

This finding further reinforces previous research that the obstacle to counseling help-seeking behavior is distrust of the counselor. Chinese people believe more in family collectivity. However, these findings also explain that counselees only have help-seeking behavior that is limited to learning and career information, not personal and social guidance.

The results of this study indicate that Asian citizens with Chinese ethnicity have different barriers in help-seeking behavior to counselors.

Likewise, Chinese people, when they have problems, trust their family more than counselors, because personal problems are internal family problems that must be kept confidential, in the Confucian school, that Chinese people educate their next generation to respect their ancestors, always work hard, be independent (Lee, 2013),

This belief is supported by a culture of self-closing towards the indigenous population (Chu, 2017), when faced with life problems, Chinese people use more alternative groups than professional groups, starting from family, friends, religious people, new literacy professional groups in this case. counselor (Sun, 2017). The Chinese believe in a culture of family collectivity,

Based on the results of this study, it implies that in order for students to be more receptive to help-seeking behavior, a counselor needs to re-orient the counselor's duties, especially personality and professional competencies and understand students' cultural values, especially the concept of counseling.

Counseling negative stigma

The second obstacle to counseling help-seeking behavior is the emergence of a negative stigma against students after counseling. Based on the interviews, it was found that the negative stigma that impedes counseling help-seeking behavior for these three ethnicities stems from negative self-perceptions, misconceptions about counseling. Self-perception as a problem child, misbehaving children and misconceptions of counseling for naughty children, counseling to reveal family disgrace, counseling to deal with punished children, counseling as an unethical activity.

Research shows that self-stigma affects low help-seeking behavior (Mahalik. & Di Bianca., 2021). Self-stigma, related to the attitude of seeking counseling help (Vogel.2007; Vidourek.et al, 2014; Coleman. et al., 2017; DeBate. et al.,2018). The desire to seek help from mental health services has significantly lower

stigma from mental illness (Han & Pong, 2015). Research shows that self-image has a high negative correlation with counselor seeking behavior (Raviv, et al., 2000). Self-stigma has a negative correlation with counseling attitudes (Vogel, et al., 2007). (Heath, et al., 2016;); Crowe. et al., 2016)). Self-stigma influences the counselor's help-seeking behavior significantly (Yamaki, & Green, 2020).

This finding corroborates several previous studies that say self-stigma is an obstacle to students in counseling help-seeking behavior. With this negative assessment, individuals are reluctant to seek counseling help from counselors. Counseling activities for Chinese students create a negative stigma that inhibits help-seeking counseling behavior.

For the Chinese ethnic, help-seeking counseling behavior will be considered as crazy, because those who seek help from counselors have mental health problems, this is in accordance with the theory and Chinese people seek the need for psychological assistance from professional groups when it reaches psychological severity which leads to psychosomatic complaints. (Sue, 2008). because they are considered unable to solve their own problems (Kim & Yon, 2019).

Based on the above, it has implications for a counselor approach strategy based on the principle of volunteerism to counselors, where students come to themselves based on the needs of the counselor.

Negative attitude towards counselling

The third barrier to counseling help-seeking behavior is a negative attitude towards counseling. Based on the research data, the similarities in conditions that inhibit help-seeking behavior of Chinese ethnic individuals, Chinese ethnicity have feelings of minority, fear of being ostracized,

Research shows a desire for counseling help-seeking behavior correlates with perceptions of loss of face (Yakunina, & Weigo.2011) Feelings of embarrassment towards counseling activities for the Chinese community in America (Quach & Hall, 2013). Research on Australian adolescents also shows that there is a fear of embarrassing the family when conveying information in counseling sessions (Price. & Daglish. 2013). Shame about opening up is self-disclosure, self-compassion, (Yelpaze, & Ceyhan, 2019), Psychological openness has a positive correlation with the tendency to seek

help behavior (Ngoc et al ., 2020). Individuals who shut themselves into the cause of the desire to seek counseling help. Self-concealment (self-concealment) affects attitudes towards seeking professional help, and then affects the desire to do counseling assistance (Yang, et al., 2016). Individuals having difficulty self-disclosure (Heath. et al, 2016; Vidourek. et al., 2014). Emotional factors become obstacles for teenagers when seeking counseling help (Bundock. et al., 2018). Self-reliance affects low desire for help-seeking behavior (Mahalik & Di Bianca., 2021). In fact, there is no benefit in opening up to other people as a reason for low interest in help-seeking behavior (Saykeo. & ,Eva..2018).

This research further confirms that the existence of feelings of shame, fear, inferiority, being closed becomes an obstacle to individuals seeking counseling assistance when facing personal problems. Feelings of shame, fear, inferiority to seek counseling help indicate a negative attitude towards counseling. For the Chinese people, the obstacle to help-seeking behavior is feeling a minority, afraid of being ostracized, this is because the Chinese people as a minority group only accept conditions as non-indigenous people. This belief is supported by a culture of self-closing towards the indigenous population (Chu, 2017),

Based on the findings above, to reduce barriers to help-seeking counseling behavior, individuals are invited to think modern rationally, open new perspectives on problem solving lifestyles, besides that counselors need to create an effective two-way directive communication strategy to reduce individual inferiority.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the obstacles that cause individuals to behave in counselor counseling help-seeking include distrust of the professionalism of the counselor, negative stigma towards counseling activities, and negative feelings towards counseling activities. The advice that must be carried out by counselors is to improve professional competence.

This research has limitations, including the location of only school-age Javanese in Surakarta. The research was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research method was limited to in-depth interviews with a limited number to maintain the safety and health of school stakeholders.

The next research that should be done is to conduct quantitative research on the obstacles to counselor counseling help-seeking behavior.

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