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Being a Good Multicultural Counselor For Persons With Disabilities

Cintami Farmawati

IAIN Pekalongan, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

cintamifarmawati@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to find out how to be a good multicultural counselor for persons with disabilities. This study uses qualitative methods and educational psychology approaches. The subjects of the study were three counselors at the state extraordinary school in Pemalang. This research lasted for three months. Based on extensive interviews and observations at the research location as the main tool for data collection, this study produced several findings. First, a multicultural counselor who is good for person with disabilities has several characteristics, they are empathy, familiarizing "greetings" and "say hello", listening wholeheartedly, having insight into cultural values of manners and the ethics of patience when interacting at person with disabilities, and mastering techniques in counseling. Second, these characteristics are able to increase and develop the career potential of person with disabilities and very helpful for person with disabilities through difficult times when facing life's problems.

Keywords: multicultural counselor, persons with disabilities

Introduction

Every citizen of Indonesia has the same rights, obligations and opportunities without discrimination. This is in accordance with the 1945 Constitution in article 27 paragraph 2, namely: "Every citizen has the right to work and a decent living for humanity". In this regard, persons with disabilities are part of Indonesian citizens who are also entitled to the same position, rights,

obligations and roles to achieve and obtain education for learning, have the right to a decent life, and have the ability to work, produce a work that has a sale value to be marked.

Persons with disabilities are often used to refer to a group of people who have mental disorders, disorders or even lost the function of his organs. Disability should not be an obstacle for persons with disabilities to obtain the right to a decent life and the right to defend their lives. Persons with disabilities are basically not a minority and must get the same attention as other normal people.

The rights of persons with disabilities are affirmed in article 42 of Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights that reads: **“Every citizen of old age, physical disability and / or mental disability has the right to receive care, education, training, special assistance at the expense of the state, to ensure a decent life in accordance with the dignity of humanity, increase self-confidence and the ability to participate in community, nation and state life”**.

The fact shows opposite condition, persons with disabilities at this time still face problems relating to their livelihoods and well-being, they are also complicated by accessibility in getting equal opportunities and the availability of special facilities for persons with disabilities that are still relatively minimal. This is confirmed by Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities that: **“Unitary State the Republic of Indonesia guarantees the survival of every citizen, including persons with disabilities who have legal standing and have the same human rights as Indonesian citizens and as an inseparable part of Indonesian citizens and society is the mandate and gift of God Almighty, to live forward and develop fairly and beneficially”**.

The results of interview with one of the counselors at Extraordinary Schools (SLB) 1 Pematang explain that persons with disabilities in Pematang Regency still face challenges in obtaining their rights. All this time, the rights of persons with disabilities have not been specifically addressed. The public's view of persons with disabilities has not provided a space for community life to accept and understand the existence of persons with disabilities. In addition, accessibility, availability of friendly facilities and infrastructure for persons with disabilities is still limited. Some public facilities that were built by considering persons with disabilities have not yet facilitated access to movement for persons with disabilities.

An assumption that disability is a disgrace, embarrassing, makes the family not open about family members who have limitations. Persons with disabilities are equated with sick and helpless people, so there is no need to be given education and employment. Persons with disabilities need to be pitied and cared for for their survival. Space to gain knowledge or skills for persons with disabilities is also still minimal.

The community still thinks that persons with disabilities are people who cannot do anything, need help in everything. Most of the world of work also still underestimates the ability of persons with disabilities. This causes discrimination against persons with disabilities, as in the requirements in the field of education as well as the main requirements for work selection which require students and employees to be physically, mentally, mentally healthy or in other words not to be disabled because it is related to their performance during education. Most of the **world of work and education can't accept a person with disabilities as employees and students.**

The problems faced by persons with disabilities are a problem of Indonesian society in general, not just a matter of "labeling" as a people who are different from the conditions in general but also related to the social welfare. The importance of the counselor's role in providing assistance or empowering persons with disabilities. Empowerment for persons with disabilities is an effort to help ease the burden of achieving their well-being.

According to Kartasmita (in Anwar, 2007: 1), empowering persons with disabilities is an effort to improve the dignity of persons with disabilities who are in a weak condition or the process of enable and empower of persons with disabilities by relying on their abilities so that they can get out of the trap of poverty and underdevelopment. Empowerment activity efforts that have been carried out by SLB Negeri 1 Pematang as the Education agency that handles the problems of persons with disabilities in the form of psychological assistance and skills training activities.

Appropriate counseling for persons with disabilities is multicultural counseling, that counseling with a multicultural approach is very appropriate for a pluralistic cultural environment such as Indonesia. Counseling is carried out on the basis of the spirit of unity in diversity, namely equality above diversity.

Counseling should be based more on the nation's cultural values that are actually able to realize a harmonious life in pluralistic conditions.

Supriatna (2011: 29) explains multicultural or cross-cultural counseling is a variety of counseling relationships involving participants from different ethnic or minority groups; or counseling relationships involving counselors and clients that are racially and ethnically the same, but have cultural differences due to other variables such as sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic factors, and age. Zaduqisti & Zulfa (2016: 48) also explained that cross-cultural counseling is counseling where counselors and clients differ in culture by using culture-biased counseling techniques. Sarwono (in Rakhmawati, 2016: 211) explains that cross-cultural counseling studies discuss the behavior of students at school and at home with various background problems, for example gender, race, ethnicity, certain classes.

Multicultural counselor competencies must also be improved and developed in helping to improve the dignity of persons with disabilities in the form of multicultural counseling competencies (KKM) as mandated in CACREP (2009) and Minister of Education Regulation Number 27 of 2008 concerning Academic Qualifications and Counselor Competencies, namely mastering cultural foundation in praxis education. Counselors must have KKM because behavior is learned and displayed in a cultural context.

Persons with disabilities have the same rights, roles and obligations as other members of the community, but they have obstacles caused by the circumstances that exist in themselves to get broad opportunities in developing their abilities. So that BK teachers or multicultural counselors have an important role in helping solve problems faced by people with disabilities and help develop the career potential of persons with disabilities in the community.

A counselor who has a different cultural background from a person with a disability is certainly not easy in helping to improve their dignity and status, this has attracted the attention of the writer to dig deeper about multikultural counselors who are good for people with disabilities. This study aims to find out how to be a good multicultural counselor for persons with disabilities.

Discussion

Multicultural Counselor

Multicultural counselor is a counselor who has cultural sensitivity and able to free himself from cultural biases, understand and able to appreciate cultural diversity, and also has culturally responsive skills (Lestari, 2015). Sue (in Susanto et al, 2017), explained multicultural competence can be defined as “**approach the counseling process from the context of the personal culture of the client**”. So it can be understood that multicultural competence is the ability (personal and professional) of counselor to use an multicultural approach in the process of counseling with the counselee who bring different culture.

Dedi (2001: 6) multicultural counselling is a counselling which involves counselor and client who come from different cultural background is very **potential for cultural biases from counselors’ side to happen, thus the counselling doesn’t run effectively**. Susanto et al (2017: 181), **multicultural counseling is a form of counseling service where the counselor and counselee have different cultural background, different values, different environment and lifestyles, thus require the counsellors to have the ability in understanding multicultural understanding, in order to prevent cultural biases, which will affect the effectiveness of counseling service.**

Akhmadi (2013: 30) explain that in implementing a multicultural counseling process, a multicultural counselor is required to have several abilities or competencies, namely: (1) Recognizing values and assumptions about desirable and undesirable behavior; (2) Understanding the general characteristics of counseling; (3) Without losing his main role as counselor he must be able to share his views with his counselee; (4) Can carry out the counseling process effectively. Christiansen et al (in Zaker & Boostanipoor, 2016: 54) multicultural counseling and therapy are in fact a strong trend in response to this urgent need. That is the reason for multiculturalism to be considered the fourth force in psychology.

According to Sue & Sue (in Miskanik, 2018: 283) there are three aspects or competencies that characterize multicultural counselors is knowledge, attitudes and skills. The author conducted interviews and observations with three multicultural counselors and persons with disabilities conducted for three months

in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang, in order to obtain information related to the research objectives in detail. The following are subject data in the study:

Table. 1. Data of Research Subject

No	Name	Gender	Age	Length of work
1	DN	Female	42 years old	18 years old
2	ZM	Male	39 years old	15 years old
3	AP	Female	36 years old	10 years old

source: results of interview, 2019

Based on the data above, the research subjects were Guidance and Counseling Teachers or multicultural counselors in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang, totaling three people. The three multicultural counselors have been accompanying and developing disabilities for 10 years at SLB Negeri 1 Pematang.

The first informant (Mrs. DN) said that for 18 years as a multicultural counselor, there were many persons with disabilities who differed from each other (individual deferensis), so that the main provisions needed such as patience, empathy and love for them, the rest must master the techniques techniques in counseling. The first informant became a multicultural counselor since 2002.

The second informant (Mr. ZM) said that in helping persons with disabilities to develop better in the community by getting used to always listening to complaints and understanding the emotions they feel. Besides that, teaching them to say hello and greet others, smile and enthusiasm as well as assist them in dealing with the difficulties of undergoing daily activities.

The third informant (Mrs. AP) explained that the problems of persons with disabilities in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang vary from the inability to carry out daily activities, learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, physical disorders, damage or hearing loss, damage or vision problems, language and speech disorders, and groups of gifted children. It takes the skills of a counselor to be able to develop their potential and help people with disabilities in dealing with life problems. The skills that must be possessed according to Mrs. AP are inviting talking, communication and listening to them wholeheartedly, teaching cultural values of etiquette, always being patient and understanding each of their behavior and mastering other counseling techniques. This skill has been carried out for

approximately 9 years by Mrs. AP as a good multicultural counselor for persons with disabilities in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang.

Multicultural awareness is one important dimension in understanding individuals and communities with cultural diversity. This will help provide meaning in understanding the differences that arise. Multicultural counselors as psychological educators have a strategic role in dealing with cultural diversity and differences. Therefore, multicultural counselors need to have competence and master a variety of forms of psychological intervention both personally and across cultures. Habsy (2017: 23), one of the skills that must be mastered by the counselor is the multicultural based counseling. The knowledge and the mastery of multicultural counseling will be very useful to give the counseling in Indonesia for general, especially in region.

Understanding of behavior and interaction processes in social life is an important factor in realizing cultural awareness in formal and informal education. The main factor that must be possessed by multicultural counselors is the ability to interact and communicate with diversity and cultural diversity. Multicultural counselors must also be sensitive to the cultural diversity of individuals, have an understanding of personal and professional racial and cultural heritage that influences understanding and things that can occur in the counseling process, as well as having knowledge about social influences on others.

Brown & Williams (in Deliani, 2018: 20), explains that multicultural counselors should be able to increase self-appreciation for cultural differences, so that they are aware of the stereotypes that exist in themselves and have a clear perception of their views on minority groups so as to increase the ability to appreciate effectively and understanding in accordance with cultural differences. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen awareness about diverse cultures in human life. The importance of understanding differences in values, perceptions, emotions and factors that constitute the diversity that exists.

Persons with Disabilities

In general, persons with disabilities according to Mangunsong (2011: 78) is a disability describing the existence of dysfunction or loss of a function can be objectively measured, seen, because of the loss/abnormalities of a person's body/organs for example, the absence of a hand, paralysis in certain parts of the

body. Coleridge (2007: 5), explains that people with disabilities lead to social models, include: Impairment (damage / weakness) and Disability / Handicap (disability / disability).

Based on the above definition it can be concluded that a person with a disability is a condition of someone who is damaged, both physically and mentally which can be caused by an illness, injury or birth defect. In this research, the focus is on persons with disabilities who experience physical disability / disability in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang.

Constitution Number 8 of 2016 concerning persons with disabilities, that persons with disabilities are any person who experiences physical, intellectual, mental, and/or sensory limitations for a long period of time in interacting with the environment can experience obstacles and difficulties to participate fully and effectively with other citizens based on equal rights, including:

1) Persons with Physical Disabilities

Persons with physical disabilities are disabilities that cause interference with bodily functions, vision, hearing, and speech. There are several terms related to physical disabilities, namely disability or handicap.

According to (Soemantri, 2012: 121), persons with physical disabilities include: (a) Blind, which is loss / loss of visual function as a result of births, accidents and illnesses (Pravitasari, et al, 2014); (b) Deaf Speech is a disability as a result of loss / disruption of hearing and speech functions both due to births, accidents and diseases. This type of disability consists of hearing impaired speech, hearing impairment, and speech impairment; (c) Impaired tuna can be interpreted as a state of damage or disturbance, as a result of malfunctioning or obstruction of bones, muscles, and joints in their normal functioning. This condition can be caused by illness, accident or can also be caused by the nature of birth.

2) Persons with Mental Disabilities

Persons with mental disabilities are mental or behavioral disorders, either a congenital defects or a result of disease. Mental disability is a state of mental development that is stopped or incomplete, which is characterized by the presence of impairment of skills during the development period, so that it affects all levels of intelligence, namely: cognitive, language, motoric and social abilities (Lumbantobing, 2006: 2).

Lumbantobing (2006: 5) divides mental disabilities into 4 classes of mental defects, namely: (a) Idiots are those with mental effects that are so severe that they are unable to protect themselves against the usual physical hazards encountered daily; (b) Imbecil, are those with mental effects, who, although not as severe as idiots, do not take care of themselves, and if they are children he cannot learn to take care of his own affairs; (c) Weak minds, are those whose mental effects are not as severe as imbecil, but need care, supervision, and management to protect themselves and others, and if they are children, they will not get the proper benefits if studying in ordinary schools; (d) Moral defects, are those who are mentally accompanied by a tendency to act criminally and need treatment, supervision and management to protect others.

Ningsih (2014: 36) mentions two categories of persons with mental disabilities, namely: (a) Tuna Laras, someone who experiences emotional disturbances and has difficulty controlling emotions. Disorders that arise in individuals in the form of behavioral disorders such as self-harm, likes to attack friends, and others; (b) Tuna Grahita, often known as a mental disability that is a mental ability that is below normal, in other words a mental disability and weak comprehension.

3) Persons with Physical and Mental Disabilities (Tuna Ganda)

Persons with physical and mental disabilities are people with more than one disability (ie physical and mental disability). Persons with physical and mental disabilities is a term for children who have a combination of disorders (both two or more types of disorders) that cause serious educational problems, so that he can not only be overcome with a special education program for one disorder, but must be approached with a variety of educational programs according to the disorder that is owned.

This research focuses on how a good Multicultural Counselor in helping and developing the career potential of persons with disabilities especially persons with physical disabilities such as the blind, hearing impaired and hearing impaired in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang.

Persons with Disabilities in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang

SLB Negeri 1 Pematang is a special school that organizes education for students with special needs (persons with disabilities), with a focus on special

programs to prepare students to attend education at a higher level or to take education in Inclusive Schools and to gain life skills so that they can live independently after graduating from SMALB. Following are the data of Administration Staff, Teachers and Students in SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang:

Table. 2. Data of Administration Staff, Teachers and Students

No	Profession	Amount
1	Administration Staff	11
2	Teacher	32
3	Male Student	189
4	Female Student	103
5	Study Group	44

source: results of interview, 2020

Based on the data above, there are 292 students with disabilities and a study group of 44. While there are 32 teachers and 11 administration staff. One of the research subjects stated that Human Resources in SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang have qualified and demonstrated expertise in accordance with their field of science so they are able to develop the career potential of persons with disabilities.

Good Multicultural Counselor for Persons with Disabilities

World Health Organization (WHO) explains that disability is a limitation or lack of ability of an organ that affects the physical or mental ability to display activities according to the rules or is still within normal limits, usually used at the individual level (Murtie, 2016: 88).

Miller, dkk (in Berger, 2013: 6-7) said disability refers to an inability to perform a personal or socially necessary task because of that impairment or the societal reaction to it. Although it has been common in the past to also use the term handicap to refer to the social disadvantage that accrues to an individual due to an impairment or disability, handicap as a concept is rarely used in scholarly or activist circles these days, largely because it has negative connotations when used to refer to persons with disabilities as inferior or deficient in some way.

The issue of persons with disabilities or people with different abilities is the problem that most rarely gets the attention of the government and the community. The neglect of the problem of people with disabilities is caused by

socio-cultural factors, in addition to economic factors and the weakness of policies and law enforcement that favor the disabled community. Persons with disabilities are the most vulnerable and marginalized in every social life (Harahap & Bustanuddin, 2015: 17-29).

In general, persons with disabilities are still in the last line, most of them are still dependent on the help and compassion of others. They have not been given the right to work in accordance with their conditions and have the same opportunities and treatment as other normal non-disabled people. However, despite being said to have limitations, groups of people with disabilities are not fully dependent on others and are unable to do anything for themselves or in social life.

Disability or limitations experienced should not be a barrier for persons with disabilities to obtain the right to life and the right to defend their lives. Persons with disabilities often have more abilities in other fields so they can work with all their limitations. Appropriate learning and training consistent with the skills possessed will enable persons with disabilities to have more achievements than other normal people.

According to Ratts & Pedersen (2015: 5-6), the competency of multicultural counselors includes self-awareness consisting of attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action. Gumilang (2015: 46) states that cultural awareness is one of the important dimensions for counselors to have. Falah (2016: 175) also mentions that counselors should understand about cultural experiences, cultural heritage, and the historical backgrounds of the groups and individuals that they handle. Barletta & Kobayasi (2007: 193), counsellors need to understand cultural issues and to explain fully the kind of help counsellors can give to students.

Multicultural counselors in SLB Negeri 1 Pematang are required to have multicultural competence, in this case is to understand the culture of persons with disabilities. Multicultural competence must be possessed by counselors to help carry out the duties of counselors in schools. One of them is accepting persons with disabilities that are different from counselors. Persons with disabilities not only carry cultural characteristics that come from the environment, but also bring uniqueness in developing themselves.

Based on interviews with research subjects, there are four roles of multicultural counselors in assisting persons with disabilities, namely:

- a. Facilitative Roles, is a role devoted to strengthen, recognize and appreciate the contributions and work of people with disabilities, build agreements with fellow parties to collaborate in the development of the potential of persons with disabilities and facilitate persons with disabilities in increasing productivity.
- b. Educative Roles, is the role in determining the agenda to provide input in the context of increase knowledge, skills and experience for persons with disabilities. The educational of roles can be done by increasing awareness, providing information and training for persons with disabilities.
- c. Representative Roles, interacting with bodies or community institutions aimed at the interests of persons with disabilities, includes: 1) Obtaining outside sources, such as venture capital assistance from various donors, training for potential development; 2) Advocating to defend persons with disabilities such as defending people with disabilities who are discriminated against by the general public; 3) Utilizing mass media to introduce products of people with disabilities, seeking support from other broader parties (government, employers, and society), opening networks of cooperation and trying to encourage people with disabilities to participate in efforts to develop career potential; 4) Share knowledge and experience with stakeholders related to the potential of persons with disabilities.
- d. Technical Roles, The ability of multicultural counselors to collect and analyze data, the ability to use computers and technical ability in organizing training activities and social service events to develop the potential of persons with disabilities. Multicultural counselors have a very important role in developing the potential of people with disabilities in the community.

Implementation of multicultural counseling conducted by research subjects includes: *self-awareness* consisting of attitudes and beliefs (empathy and belief that persons with disabilities have potential that must be developed), *knowledge* (knowledge of the cultural values of etiquette and ethics patiently interact persons with disabilities), *skills* (having skills in using counseling techniques to help persons with disabilities), and *actions* (actions taken by multicultural counselors through educative roles, facilitative roles, representative roles and technical roles).

Together with other teachers, multicultural counselors help develop the career potential of persons with disabilities. Some of the products produced by persons with disabilities in SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang, include:

- a. The various kinds of products produced by persons with disabilities have been seen, including: batik products have been used by Mr. Ganjar Pranowo (Governor of Central Java), as well as several department heads in Pemalang Regency



Picture 1. Governor of Central Java Wearing Batik the Created of SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang (source: jateng.antarnews.com, 2019)

- b. Food products from culinary of art even already have their own brands and many people are starting to order. The products of culinary seeded include pineapple and breadfruit processed that becomes naget and cake.
- c. The teachers and students with disabilities demonstrate their expertise according to the field of study studied, which is displayed during celebration the anniversary of Pemalang SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang every years.
- d. SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang succeeded in achieving the achievements of students, both at the local, regional and national levels. So, hope that Pemalang SLB 1 becomes a reference school as well as a child-friendly schools.
- e. The various kinds of products by persons with disabilities and SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang will be exhibited at the Dekranasda shoroom. It is hoped that through promotion through the Pemalang Dekranasda, various kinds of products made by persons with disabilities at SLB Negeri 1 Pemalang are better known to the wider community, so they can make a real contribution to the economy.

- f. SLB Negeri 1 Pematang intensively provides skills training to persons with disabilities including training in making fabric of batik, making fast food or culinary art and beauty training.

In general, a multicultural counselor must have knowledge about counseling and socio-cultural techniques, an open and tolerant attitude towards differences, as well as skills in effectively modifying counseling techniques in different cultural settings. In addition, an Indonesian counselor needs to understand the special characteristics of culture and sub-culture of the diverse Indonesian nation and be able to make diversity as a unifying element in the life of the nation and state in Indonesia.

Conclusion

Based on interviews and observations with several multicultural counselors, on-site research and documentation, it can be concluded that a multicultural counselor who is good for persons with disabilities has several characteristics namely having empathy, accustoming "greetings" and "say hello", listening wholeheartedly, having insight into the cultural values of etiquette and the ethics of patience when interacting at persons with disabilities and master techniques in counseling. In addition, the characteristics of the multicultural counselor are able to enhance and develop the career potential of people with disabilities and greatly assist persons with disabilities in going through difficult times when facing life problems.

Based on the results of study, there are a number of suggestions that can be given including multicultural counselors in order to continue to improve their multicultural counseling skills and develop the career potential of persons with disabilities. For persons with disabilities, the spirit continues to actualize self potential and is confident that they are unique, special and valuable. Suggestions and recommendations for further research are that it is necessary to examine how the psychological dynamics of persons with disabilities develop their potential, family support from persons with disabilities, and other variables relating to disabilities that are interesting to study.

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