

Issues on the identity of a professional counselor

Mochamad Nursalim

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia | ✉ mochamadnursalim@unesa.ac.id

Abstract

Until now there is still some doubt in formulating a professional identity of counselors in Indonesia, There are those who want education for counselors candidate in Indonesia leads to specialization of school counseling, career counseling, or personal counseling; and is focused on development, prevention rather than medical/clinical models. Aggrement that has not been set up yet among counselor education providers has made the identity of professional counselors increasingly not clear. This paper seeks to review current issues related to the identity of professional counselors. Based on conceptual studies, it can be asserted that the identity of professional counselors is prominent and unique is the key to the profession in order to develop and not be marginalized, and parallel to other mental health professions. the adoption of SK Kemenristekdikti number 257/M/KPT/2017 about the name of the study program at the college, which contains the name of counselor profession education (Counselor profession Education) with a degree Kons. very influential on the development of the identity of professional counselors in Indonesia.

Keywords: Issues, Identity, Counselor, Counseling, Professional

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Introduction

The existence of a professional identity is very important for the profession, and is the main focus of the counselor candidate education (ACA, 2009; CACREP, 2009). CACREP (2009) paid special attention to develop a professional identity of counseling. ACA (2009) states that the development of integrated professional identity has several benefits for counselors; although professional identity among counselors often gets wrong intrepetation in the profession (Burkholder, 2012; Gale & Austin, 2003; Myers et al., 2002).

Professional identity is part of the counselor's self (Gazzola & Smith, 2007; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010) and is a self - professional integration and self personal (including values, theories, and techniques). Personal attributes attached with professional counselor training will form a professional

identity. In an ethical context, counselors depend on their professional identity as their terms of reference making decisions about their work relating to clients (Brott & Myers, 1999; Friedman & Kaslow, 1986; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992).

The mention of professional identity is still debatable and continues to be confusing, especially the definition, clarity, and professionalism of professional identity (Burkholder, 2012; Calley & Hawley, 2008; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers et al., 2002). Gibson, Dooley, Kelchner, Moss, and Vacchio (2012) argue that the attention given to professional identity is less consistent and not addressed to various aspects of professional identity. Many researchers have attempted to define and clarify the meaning of professional identity, emphasizing aspects such as training, roles, meaningful decisions, and perceptions (Gale & Austin, 2003; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Myers et al., 2002). Researchers have also sought to explore the aspects of professionalism and professional identity, and why historically cohesiveness is difficult for the counseling profession (Gale & Austin, 2003; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Mellin et al., 2011). However, studies that investigate the expression of identity have been ignored (Burkholder, 2012; Hawley & Calley, 2009). The definition of the identity of professional counselors varies in the literature. Gale and Austin (2003) describe professional identity as a way of distinguishing counseling from other similar professions. Gladding and Newsome (2004) describe the counselor's professional identity as loyalty to the core values of prevention, wellness, and development. Nugent and Jones (2009) the definition of professional identity as "integration of personal attributes and professional training".

This definition is supported by research connecting personal identity with professional identity, informing its development (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; du Preez & Roos, 2008). Professional identities can be viewed at the individual or collective level (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Brue, 2012; Gale & Austin, 2003; Hawley & Calley, 2009). The individual's professional identity is how the counselor perceives his or her role in the profession (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Lewis & Hatch, 2008). Feedback from others helps inform the development of professional identity, and allows external evaluation to internal self-evaluation (Gibson et al., 2010; Auxier et al., 2003; Dollarhide, Gibson & Moss, 2013). The collective professional identity is a unique identity that distinguishes counseling from similar helping professions (Gale & Austin, 2003; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Mellin et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2002). A review of the literature shows a lack of research on how counselors express both individual and their collective professional identities (Burkholder, 2012; Calley & Hawley, 2009). Researchers have extensively examined the counselor's challenges in developing professional identity (Gale & Austin, 2003; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Mellin et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2002). Counseling is referred to as "the youngest of the working professions" (Mellin et al., 2011, p.140), and the most recent profession compared to other mental health professions contributes to those still experiencing difficulties in establishing an identity (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Mellin et al., 2011). In addition, similarities with other professions and overlapping in roles make it difficult to establish a unique identity (Myers et al., 2002; Alves & Gazzola, 2011). The confusion of formulating an integrated professional identity may be the result of two main factors: merging school counseling specialties, career counseling, and personal counseling; and the tension between humanistic counseling counseling and medical / clinical models (Gale & Austin, 2003; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers et al., 2002). Although the development of the counseling profession is an unification of various specializations, it provides valuable value to the profession, while also making unity more difficult (McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers, 1995; Myers et al., 2002).

Counselors have different professional organizations that provide different types of licenses, and counselors have received training from different certifying institution (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Gale & Austin, 2003). Counseling professions are associated with wellness, prevention, and development (Gale & Austin, 2003; Myers, 1995). Difficulties arise when the counselor tries to balance this identity with the direction of the medical model needs (McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009). The challenge of dealing with

professional identity also affects counselors' ability to express their professional identity by making it difficult to recognize open paths for them and strengthen the expression of narrow views (Burkholder, 2012; Hawley & Calley, 2009). There are many benefits to be gained by having a unique identity (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Mellin et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2002). Building professional identity is beneficial to the profession as a whole, for counselors, and clients (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Gale & Austin, 2003; Myers et al., 2002). McLaughlin and Boettcher (2009) argue that the affirmation of a prominent and unique professional identity is the key to the profession in order to thrive and not be marginalized. A concrete professional identity will help the counselor to get in balance with other mental health professions (Calley & Hawley, 2008; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Myers et al., 2002). The clarity of counselor's professional identity provides a sense of security to the counselor, stability, and clarity of Alves & Gazzola's role, 2011; Mellin et al., 2011). A clear professional identity also contributes to a sense of pride and a sense of satisfaction (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Gibson et al., 2010). Professional cohesion is needed to develop so that the profession is recognized to be unique and contribute significantly to the helping profession (Burkholder, 2012; Gale & Austin, 2003; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009).

By revealing a professional identity, counselors can improve their self-awareness and make career decisions and engagement on the type of profession (Burkholder, 2012). The effort toward presenting an integrated professional identity enables greater advocacy for clients and social change, as there is enhanced public awareness (Gale & Austin, 2003; Myers et al., 2002). Counselors with strong professional identity are also better able to collaborate with other professionals, creating better outcomes for clients (Mellin et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2002).

Discussion

The CACREP Standard (2009) mandates that counselor educators should encourage the identity of professional counselors obtained by students while in education and training. Calley and Hawley (2008) suggest that counselor educators are assigned with initiating the development of professional identity when students attend education and training. Gibson, Dollahide, and Moss (2010) add that the entire professional community has a responsibility to help "new clinics" with aspects of their development. Counselor educators expose students to promote professional identity at multiple levels, including discussions, textbooks, articles, modeling, and student organizational engagement (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Coll et al., 2013; Lewis & Hatch, 2008).

The majority of novice counselors are interested in the development of a strong professional identity (Gibson et al., 2010). The professional community has the responsibility to provide learning experiences, mentoring, and modeling that inform professional development in professionals novice and student (Gibson et al., 2010; Gibson et al., 2012; Lewis & Hatch, 2008; Luke & Goodrich, 2010). Gibson et al. (2010) states three stages of development of counselor professional identity in training: a) integration of personal skills and attributes, b) self-view as part of the professional society, and c) self-perception through feedback from other professionals. They also found three transformational tasks that constitute counseling students' experiences: a) defining counseling, b) taking responsibility for professional growth, and c) establishing systemic identities.

Auxier et al. (2003) describes how counseling students shift from dependency on authority figures (eg, supervisors or educators) to autonomous self-evaluation. The studied students develop an internal locus as self-evaluation through meaningful feedback, self-perception testing, and self-awareness fostered by supervision and learning.

Self-awareness, very important to build professional identity (Coll et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010). Ethical standards and professional membership are also core aspects of professional identity (Coll et al., 2013; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Myers et al., 2002), Luke and Goodrich (2010) found that student

experience in leadership contributed to improve identity development their professionals, especially their ability to conceptualize their roles and identities with professional systems. Educators Counselors and supervisors can help counseling students recognize an open path for them to express their professional identity including the type of training, career options, and educational opportunities (Burkholder, 2012).

In essence, the counselor professional identity includes both interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions. The interpersonal dimension of professional identity involves a counselor relationship with the community and the professional community (Gibson et al., 2010). Professional societies include professional organizations, licensing agencies and credentials agencies, and accrediting agencies. The Interpersonal aspect also involves the professional community of counselors. A counselor emerges learning about the professional culture of counseling through supervision and experience (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Professional identity is also formed from within a person and consisted an intrapersonal dimension of professional identity (Gibson et al., 2010). Personal definitions of counseling evolved, changes in evaluation locus, and reflection became increasingly important as counselor identity. New professionals move from external to internal locus evaluations and from expert dependence to dependence on their own experience and training (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Gibson et al., 2010; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 2003). The majority of research related to the development of counselor professional identity is more centered on counselor candidates (during training / lectures) than professional counselors working (Auxier et al., 2003; Howard, Inman, & Altman, 2006; Gibson et al., 2010; Nelson & Jackson , 2003; Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007). The theory of the development of counselor identity during training (Auxier et al, 2003; Gibson et al, 2010) suggests that through experience, work practice, and commitment to the profession, the counselor's professional identity develop from time to time

Result

There are several models of professional identity counselor development. Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992, 1995, & 2003) have written several themes about the stages of identity counselor development. In addition, Stoltenberg, McNeil and Delworth (1998) developed the Integrated Development Model (IDM) which is considered the most widely used model (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Integrated Model Development (IDM) describes the developmental stage of the counselor, characterized by three structures that characterize professional growth: self-awareness, motivation, and autonomy (Stoltenberg et al., 1998). IDM also specifies eight domains of professional functions: a) competence of intervention skills, b) assessment techniques, c) interpersonal assessment, d) client conceptualization, e) individual differences, f) theoretical orientation, g) treatment plan and objectives, and h) ethics professional. Counselor advances through four levels where they grow in their respective domains. This growth can be assessed through the three structures discussed earlier. This growth along with this structure informs the development of a professional identity as a mature counselor and the acquisition of experience.

Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992, 2003) also designed a counselor development model called the Phase Therapist / Development Counselor (PTCD) Model. This model includes four phases of development: a) the helper phase, b) the initial student phase, c) the advanced student phase, and d) the beginner professional phase. This phase illustrates how counselors integrate knowledge and skills, overcome anxiety and insecurity, learn new experiences from clients, develop limitations, choose a theoretical orientation, and discover their own style. This phase also shows growth in aspects of professional identity as counselors, who are competent and have a sense of part of the professional community.

The lack of research as a means and model for expressing and operationalizing professional identity has happened for long time, though other aspects of identity are noticed (Burkholder, 2012; Hawley & Calley, 2009). To operationalize the professional identity of counselors in daily life is hard to find in the literature (Hawley & Calley, 2009). Some of the manifestations of professional identity are encouraged in the literature, including advocacy, inter-professional collaboration, legislation and lobbying efforts, and involvement of professional organizations (Gale & Austin, 2003; Hawley & Calley, 2009; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009; Mellin et al, 2011; Myers et al., 2002). However, there remains a lack of literature on the expression of the identity of professional counselors (Burkholder, 2012; Hawley & Calley, 2009).

In the literature review there are two articles on the direct, professional counselor identity expression: Burkholder (2012) "Professional Identity Expression (PIE) model," and Preez and Roos (2008) "Exploration of South African Counselors' Visual Expressions of Identity. Burkholder (2012) synthesized two writings of Boyer, (1990) definitions of scholarship, and (2009) Owen's concept of intentionality, to create a professional identity expression (PIE) Model.

The PIE model explains how intentionality is used to progress from conceptualization to the contextualization of professional identity, and ultimately to the expression of professional identity. This expression can be achieved through discovery, application, instruction, and integration. Building on the definition of professional identity as the integration of professional training and personal attributes by Nugent and Jones (2009), the expression of professional Identity is a manifestation of integration through behavior (Burkholder, 2012). Owen (2009) defines intentionality as a purposeful behavior directed at the results of course, the explanation of "why" behaves. Burkholder (2012) identifies three categories of application of intentionality to counselor professional identity: a) conceptualization, or awareness and understanding of professional identity; b) contextualization, or an environment in which professional identity can be expressed; and c) expression, or observable behavior that characterizes professional identity.

There is limited research on the development of counselor identity at various points in the career span of life. Mellin, Hunt, and Nichols (2011) found that counselors believe they work differently from other helping professions and that counselor identity is focused on development, prevention, and happiness orientation. Some studies cite the need for more information about the professional development of identity over the professional lifespan (Bischoff, Barton, Thober, & Hawley, 2002; Brott, 2006; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2013; Gibson et al, 2010, Howard et al., 2006; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992). Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) provide a Model phase describing the "center of the counselor / therapist's development process" (page 5) from novice professionals to senior professionals. Postgraduate professionals are cross-sectionally interviewed, they have an average of 5, 15, and 25 years of professional experience with doctoral degrees in psychology professionals. Obtained data, the following themes are emerging: (a) There is increased integration of professional and personal; (b) continuous reflection is required for optimal learning; (c) a strong commitment to the development of a learning impulse; (d) the development of a professional identity is continuous, lifelong, and may become uncertain; (e) the client influences the identity of the counselor; (f) personal life experiences affect the development of counselor identity; (g) interpersonal sources (eg, tutors, supervisors, counselors, peers, family) influence the development of counselor identity; and (h) thoughts and feelings about the profession and client changes from time to time.

Other research conducted by Julie M. Moss, Donna M. Gibson, and Colette T. Dollarhide, (2014) Discovered six important themes for the development of counselor identity: adjustments to expectations, trust and freedom, separation versus integration, guided experience, learn continuously, and work with clients. In addition, the process emerges transformational tasks at every stage of

professional life. This study highlights the process of developing the identity of professional counselors and how the professional changes over the life span. The development of identity is a lifelong process. As long as the counselors are aware of this process, they can be more effective and gain greater job satisfaction.

Profession guidance and counseling in Indonesia experienced significant progress. Although in its journey many obstacles and obstacles. Almost the same as the development of the guidance and counseling profession in the US, the development of the guidance and counseling profession in Indonesia is also influenced by external domains and internal domains. Below are described both domains.

External Domain

External domains that affect the development of the counseling profession in Indonesia are as follows.

- a. Instructions Ministry of education and culture Officials on the establishment of Guidance and counseling in the School.
- b. The establishment of a new-style school curriculum in 1964.
- c. The establishment of the 1975 curriculum.
- d. Application of the 1994 Curriculum.
- e. Legalization of the National Education System which legally confirms and asserts that the counselor is an educator.
- f. Permendiknas approved about the workload of guidance and counselling teachers / Counselor
- g. Ratified by Government Regulation on coaching, mentoring and recovery of suspect and victims of pornography.
- h. Permendikbud establishment on guidance and counseling on primary and secondary education and specialization.
- i. SK Kemenristekdikti number 257 / M / KPT / 2017 about the name of the study program at the college, which contains the name of counselor profession (Counselor profession Education) with the title of Kons.

Internal Domain

- j. Internal domains that affect the development of the counseling profession in Indonesia are as follows.
- k. Establishment of guidance and counseling in LPTK.
- l. Establishment of IPBI (Indonesian Guidance Officers Association), which eventually changed its name to ABKIN (Guidance and Counseling Indonesia Association).
- m. The Basic Standards establishment of Counseling Profession (DSPK)
- n. Permendiknas establishment about SKA and KK (Academic Qualification Standard and Counselor Competence).

Conclusion

The development of professional identity of counseling in Indonesia is currently influenced by the issuance of SK Kemenristekdikti number 257 / M / KPT / 2017 about the name of study program at college, which contains counselor profession education name (Counselor profession Education) with title Kons. The decree establishment is an opportunity and challenge for the board and members of ABKIN to strengthen and coordinate for the coordinate of the decree to support the development of professional identity of counseling in Indonesia.

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