

## Communication Patterns of Counselors with Counseling Patients at the Cilegon City National Narcotics Agency

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### Abstract

*The research explains the communication patterns of counselors with counseling patients of the Cilegon City National Narcotics Agency, with the highest number of adolescent drug addicts in Banten province. The research used a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques to explore informant data. Counseling communication patterns between counselors and counseling patients are the object of research. The research informant selection technique uses purposive sampling or informant determination technique with certain considerations. The main informants in the research are counseling patients and counselors at BNNK Cilegon who are in charge of rehabilitating adolescent drug abuser patients. The results revealed that the counseling communication pattern at BNNK Cilegon is included in the circular pattern, the message interaction process takes place in two directions and the communicant actively conveys message feedback. Counselors apply a counseling technique called client-centered therapy which is based on the equality of counselors and patients, the counseling program at BNNK Cilegon is divided into interpersonal counseling sessions for counselors and patients, family support sessions, and group therapy. This research is expected to be able to provide an overview of interactive counseling communication patterns, as well as provide perceptions to embrace drug addicts to escape drug addiction.*

**Keywords :** *Communication Patterns, Counseling, Counselor, Patient*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cilegon City is one of the most vulnerable areas for drug trafficking in Banten province, especially among teenagers who have a low resilience index value. One of the causes of drug abuse is due to low self-control, self-control is the ability to regulate, direct and control behavior in accordance with written and unwritten social values. (Miya, 2021).

The value of the youth resilience index in 2021 found that Cilegon city was in the low category, with a value of 49.25 compared to other cities in Banten province. Cilegon city is most vulnerable to contamination of drug trafficking in the teenage group, the reason the majority of teenagers take drugs is because of the high sense of wanting to try or self-exploitation.

The Cilegon BNNK (National Narcotics Agency) rehabilitation patient recap data shows that adolescent patients dominate with a total of 21 patients in 2021. 2022 shows that adolescent patients still occupy the largest number with a total of 10 patients, plus 2 patients under the age of 18. Adolescents referred to in the study are children aged 15-17 years.

The researcher examined the counseling communication patterns applied by counselors during the counseling process for adolescent patients. The counseling communication approach applied develops following the flow of communication technology, such as Whatsapp-based online counseling, or counselors conduct Youtube-based psychoeducation so that adolescent patients are more comfortable undergoing the counseling process. The classic counseling communication approach is still a procedure at BNNK Cilegon, but counselors try to develop their approach as a guideline for client-centered therapy counseling techniques for adolescent patients today.

Communication patterns according to Djamarah are a model or description of the process of sending messages to communicants appropriately, so that communicants can understand the contents of the message. The communication pattern according to Effendy is a simple description of the communication process that shows the relationship between one communication component and another. (Soejatno, cited in Sihombing, 2019).

Carl Rogers invented a counseling technique called Client-centered Therapy, which is a counseling technique or social therapy centered on the client or patient. (Rosada, cited in Corey, 2016). The counseling method is a renewal of other methods of its time, because it assumes an equal position between the counselor and the patient or client. The counselor tries to establish a relationship with the patient through a persuasive approach, so that trust is built between the two parties, and the patient is treated as an adult who can make his own decisions and be responsible for his decisions.

Counseling communication is a communication process to create empathy between counselors and patients, verbally and nonverbally. (Ayu, Fatihatur, 2019). The process of achieving empathy is carried out gradually until the patient feels comfortable with the communication process. The counselor will share experiences with the patient to reflect on the patient's problems.

The method or approach used by the counselor is the key to successful counseling. Based on the communication indicators that have been described, counselors can apply a self-disclosure approach with patients. Self-disclosure is a communication approach to achieve openness between the counselor and the patient so that there are no restrictions that hold both parties to exchange information. (Fadli, 2013).

Self-disclosure is an approach in interpersonal communication to provide

information about the self that is usually hidden from others. (Devito, cited in Yanti, 2011). Self-disclosure is the process of conveying information about past events, providing information about ourselves, or responses to situations we are facing. Self-disclosure aims to provide information to communicants about their point of view on problems, based on the background of events that have been experienced in the past.

Families can be a source of social support for drug addict rehabilitation patients. Families who participate in the rehabilitation process can indirectly see the other side of the patient that the family may not know. Patients who are accompanied by their families certainly feel embarrassed, so that patients think about the risk of repeating their mistakes for the second time. If the family is unable to become a direct source of social support for rehabilitation patients, it is likely that the patient will experience relapse and return to abusing drugs. (Muhammad, 2020).

BNNK Cilegon rehabilitation counselors implement a family support program or involve patient family support in the patient's rehabilitation process. The program is implemented because the family is the key to the success of the rehabilitation process, especially in adolescent patients. They believe that adolescent patients still have a respected figure in the family, so that patients are more serious about participating in the rehabilitation program and can recover from drug addiction. In addition, the counselor can also understand more about the patient's background from the family's perspective, so that the patient cannot manipulate the medical records of the rehabilitation process.

Several rehabilitation centers use the FGD method as one of the patient counseling methods, including BNNK Cilegon. The FGD method is applied as an effort to build motivation between rehabilitation patients, as well as to observe the progress of each patient in building self-confidence. Group characteristics that can be part of group communication theory according to Alvin A. Goldberg and Carl E. Larson are interpersonal feedback, group interaction speed, group phases, group norms, group climate or atmosphere, interpersonal conflict and leadership distribution. (Yanti, 2011)

The group communication method is applied by BNNK Cilegon as an effort to avoid the group think phenomenon, which is the cohesiveness or similarity of group members' thoughts that can negatively affect the group. Group think theory explains that aligned group thinking limits the freedom of opinion of group members, such as group members who decide to agree with other members to avoid conflict. According to Janis (1982), groups that apply group think cannot last long. (Hafnita, Anisah, 2018). The group think phenomenon has the potential to occur if there is a public figure in the group, so that his opinion is considered dominant and the majority of group members decide to side with his opinion.

Unlike the interpersonal communication method which is more closed, the FGD method in rehabilitation is open and each patient is free to express their opinions until they are able to rebuild their confidence in public. (Agustini et al., 2021). The counselor in FGD can focus more on observing the progress of rehabilitation patients without directly participating in the communication process, so that the counselor can save energy to think about the topic of discussion in counseling.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

Research on Communication Patterns of Counselors with Counseling Patients at the Cilegon City National Narcotics Agency applied a qualitative descriptive method. Centered interview was chosen as the approach used in this study to extract data from informants. A centered interview is a process of questioning the subject or informant to extract information according to the needs of the researcher, by designing questions to

ask the subject or informant.

Researchers applied centralized interviews to extract data from counselors and rehabilitation patients, the process took place repeatedly until the data was saturated. The interview process was repeated to strengthen the data, especially from patients as key informants in the study.

Researchers examined the communication patterns of counselors and counseling patients at BNNK Cilegon. The communication pattern applied is a circular pattern, the patient acts as an active communicant who provides direct feedback so that the counseling process takes place interactively. The research location is at the Cilegon BNNK office, Banten. Cilegon City.

The research informant selection technique used purposive sampling or informant determination technique with certain considerations. The main informants in the research are counseling patients and counselors at BNNK Cilegon who are in charge of rehabilitating adolescent drug abuser patients.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

BNNK Cilegon counselors apply an offline and online counseling communication approach, with the participation of the patient's parents to report the patient's progress at home. Counselors apply basic questions for each counseling session, counselor questions for patients based on several indicators, namely specific, miserable, accuracy, and transparent which are abbreviated as (SMART). The SMART question indicator serves as a reminder for counselors to pay attention to the miserable aspect, based on the counselor's experience stating that adolescent patients are more sensitive and tend to be emotional.

BNNK Cilegon counselors apply a counseling communication approach called client- centered therapy found by Carl Rogers, this approach instills the principle of equality between counselors and patients. (Rachmad, 2017) The counselor establishes a relationship with the patient through persuasive communication, until it reaches the self-disclosure stage. Self disclosure is a process of interpersonal communication to provide information about the self that is usually hidden from others. (Devito, cited in Yanti, 2011). Self-opening or self- disclosure is the process of conveying information about past events, providing information about oneself, or responses to the situation at hand.

BNNK Cilegon counselors establish a family support counseling program or invite the patient's parents to participate in counseling. The patient's parents and the counselor exchange information about the progress of the patient's rehab, through the views of the parents at home and the counselor during counseling sessions. The family support program aims to close the gap for patients to relapse or relapse to using drugs. Supervision of the patient's parents at home is expected to increase the patient's motivation to recover, through maintained communication between parents and patients. (Siregar, 2021).

The patient's parents felt greatly helped by participating in the rehabilitation process, stating that the patient had progressed after completing the 12-meeting counseling program. The patient's parents supported the patient's interests as a form of direct support from parents in the patient's recovery, and it was proven that the patient's parents stated that the patient showed psychological development. The patient showed a change in communication behavior to be more open, besides that the patient also no longer showed the habits of drug users, such as often being alone in the room.

The counseling communication process applied by the counselor takes place in two directions and forms a circular or rotating pattern. Counselors and patients undergo

a face-to-face counseling process at the Cilegon BNNK office, or online via video call. The counselor asks an open-ended question at the first counseling meeting as an initial procedure for patient rehabilitation, before entering into routine counseling sessions. The first counseling meeting is a stage of introducing the counselor to the patient, as well as explaining the series of counseling processes to the patient.

The counselor starts the counseling session by asking what the patient is called by his peers. The counselor's call to the patient is a counseling communication effort in building the patient's trust relationship with the counselor, by getting the patient to consider the counselor as a peer who can hear all his complaints. The counselor used the greetings "cave" and "lo" during counseling as a means of affective approach with the patient. Patients also stated that the counselor's message was well conveyed during online counseling, proving that the counselor is competent and able to be a communicator who can convey messages face-to-face and online.

BNNK Cilegon counselors apply circular communication patterns in every counseling session, the patient directly conveys feedback on the messages conveyed by the counselor. The counselor gives freedom of opinion to the patient, as the counselor said that the patient is free to express his complaints, even though it does not discuss drug problems. This effort was made by the counselor to explore information from the patient, so that the counselor could adjust the communication approach based on the patient's character through the analysis of communication psychology.

The process of message interaction during counseling is 2-way, the counselor and patient interact constantly until the counseling session ends. The counselor, patient, and patient's parents exchange information to support the success of the counseling process. The counselor communicates with the patient for counseling purposes, and the patient's parents to report the patient's rehab progress, then the parents communicate with the patient to control the patient's behavior during the rehab process at home. The counseling communication process that takes place between counselors, patients, and parents can be described as a pyramid that is interconnected between its corners.

The patient stated that the counselor was able to provide advice to keep him away from drugs, and it was proven that the patient could keep away from drug addiction with simple advice from the counselor. Counseling is a medium of communication for patients who try to give practical advice on the obstacles they experience and find the best solution, the effectiveness of counselor communication determines the success of counseling. (Dalem, 2015).

The counselor advised the patient to change his daily habits by taking time to build himself up, by developing his talents according to his interests. The patient said that the counselor gave him advice to hone his musical skills, then move the patient's bedroom where he used to use drugs. BNNK Cilegon counselors give advice to patients based on each patient's experience, referring to the patient's daily activities as the basis of the problem that triggered the patient to use drugs.

The patient's parents expressed similar opinions to the patient regarding the counselor's advice. The patient's parents said that the counselor not only conducted question and answer sessions during counseling, but also objectively sought the right solution for the patient. The counselor viewed the best solution for the patient as the patient was to move his room, considering at that time the patient spent a lot of time in his room as a comfort zone for using drugs.

The patient said that his parents supported the counselor's suggestion by providing him with facilities that support his interests. The counselor aims for the patient

to have a good occupation such as developing his interests, so that the patient no longer has a lot of free time that can be used to use drugs. The message interaction that takes place during counseling at BNNK Cilegon is interconnected between the patient, the counselor and the patient's parents. All parties exchange information like a spinning wheel and are interconnected.

The counselor gave the patient advice with consideration of the reasons and the most comfortable place for the patient to use drugs. This consideration is a simple factor that is often the root of the patient's problem, besides that the counselor invites the patient's parents to support the development of his interests as an effort to divert the patient from drugs. The counselor asked the patient's interests and conveyed them to the parents, in this case the counselor carried out his duties as a mediator conveying messages from the patient and parents to find the best solution for the patient and his parents.

Counselors and parents communicate with each other to report the patient's progress, both during counseling sessions and at home. Information from both parties can strengthen data on the progress of the patient's recovery, so that the rehabilitation process can take place effectively and anticipate miscommunication.

BNNK Cilegon counselors anticipate miscommunication by re-asking patients at the end of each counseling session. The counselor applies this effort to the patient by asking the important points obtained during counseling, then the counselor can find out the messages that have not been conveyed to the patient. the counselor applies this effort as a personal tactic to avoid patient miscommunication during counseling. The counselor then reports the results of counseling to his parents by mentioning the important points obtained by the patient, so that the patient's parents can know the progress of counseling.

BNNK Cilegon counselors implement a group therapy program at the end of the offline counseling session. Group therapy or group discussion aims to avoid the phenomenon of group think, which is the cohesiveness or similarity of group members' thoughts that can negatively affect the group. Group think theory explains that aligned group thinking limits the freedom of opinion of group members, such as group members who decide to agree with other members to avoid conflict. According to Janis (1982), groups that apply group think cannot last long. (Hafnita, Anisah, 2018). The group think phenomenon has the potential to occur if there is a public figure in the group, so that his opinion is considered dominant and the majority of group members decide to side with his opinion.

The group think phenomenon revealed by Janis is inversely proportional to the group of rehabilitation patients in group therapy. Group members' thinking to avoid debate in the counseling process aims to maintain group identity. Group think that occurs during counseling of drug addict patients, makes the group have a good relationship and may have high cohesiveness. The counselor discusses the purpose of group therapy to recover patients who are demotivated, through this method the counselor tries to build the patient's motivation to recover from drug addiction. The freedom of speech of each group therapy member is still limited by the counselor as a moderator, to prevent oversharing or excessive self-opening that can trigger negative perceptions.

The counselor applies the basic indicators of interpersonal communication to support counseling interactions with patients, the counselor hears the patient's complaints, understands the core of the message well, and makes eye contact, and makes body movements to get the patient's sympathy. (Riswandi, 2009). The patient stated that

the interaction during counseling was very effective and the message was conveyed well, although counseling took place online via video call, the counselor could apply the basic indicators of communication well. The counselor can carry out the role of a good communicator and communicant, the patient also stated that during counseling the counselor and patient exchanged stories like peers.

An effective counseling communication approach can avoid miscommunication, which is an obstacle to counseling communication when the elements of communication are disrupted by several factors so that the process is ineffective. (Pinem, 2019). One of the barriers to counseling communication is the hurdle of thinking barriers, the difference in perception between the communicator and the communicant of the message being conveyed causes differences in views on the phenomenon being discussed. Barriers to thinking can be caused by different educational backgrounds, so counselors must know the patient's educational background to facilitate the counseling process. (Salisah, 2015).

The patient's knowledge is also a factor in barriers, in addition to educational background, with extensive knowledge the counselor can understand the message from the patient. For example, if the counselor understands the basic concepts of music that the patient is interested in, then the counselor can discuss many things about music. The counselor's knowledge is an effort to get the patient's attention, so that the patient is comfortable to undergo all counseling processes. This is the basic concept of communication, everyone is more open with people who are on the same frequency or can understand everything that is being discussed. The final stage of counseling is then sought by the counselor to ensure that the patient understands the core of the message during the counseling session.

The counselor tried to ask the patient about the core of the discussion during counseling to avoid miscommunication, considering that the counselor and patient were separated by age and education level. The counselor made these efforts to prove the effectiveness of counseling communication, as well as assess the patient's progress in capturing messages from the counselor during counseling. The counselor applied this as a personal tactic outside the counseling procedure, proving that the counselor mastered the basic concepts of interpersonal communication well.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The research revealed that BNNK Cilegon's counseling communication pattern is included in the circular communication pattern. The counselor applies a client-centered therapy counseling approach or the counselor places himself parallel to the patient. The results revealed that the counseling interaction took place in two directions, the patient as an active communicator gave continuous message feedback. Patients feel comfortable with the counseling communication process, because the counselor can interact like a patient's peer.

The counselor created a family support program that invites the patient's parents to contribute to the patient's recovery. The counselor acts as a mediator of messages between the patient and parents, as well as finding the best solution to release the patient from drug addiction. The process of exchanging messages between the counselor, patient, and parents is interconnected like a triangle that is interconnected between its corners.

#### **5. ADVICE**

Suggestions for BNNK Cilegon counselors, to maintain good performance as counselors. Researchers hope that counselors are always innovative in finding interactive and modern counseling communication approaches, such as online counseling that has been implemented after the pandemic. Advice for readers, for readers who want to find information

about BNN counseling communication patterns to find credible sources and directly from counselors as primary data sources. Researchers hope that readers can wisely sort out sources of information and avoid plagiarizing content.

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