



Management of Special Guidance and Counseling Services in Improving Students' Academic Achievement

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ABSTRACT

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Managing special guidance and counseling services within Islamic boarding school-integrated madrasahs requires a structured organizational approach to support students' educational progress. This study aims to analyze the management of guidance and counseling services—encompassing planning, organizing, executing, and supervising functions—in enhancing student academic achievement. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to gather data from school leaders, counselors, and students through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, followed by data reduction, display, and drawing conclusions. The findings reveal that service planning begins with problem-identification instruments, while organizing involves cross-functional collaboration among school staff and parents. Implementation includes orientation, classical guidance, and individual or group counseling, monitored through continuous evaluation and follow-up. This research implies that systematic guidance and counseling management serves as a crucial strategic framework to strengthen learning motivation, cultivate study discipline, and resolve learning obstacles, thereby fostering higher academic performance in integrated religious educational settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental instrument for developing human potential and improving the quality of society (Leoni, 2025; Zickafoose et al., 2024). Its success depends not only on classroom instruction but also on the effective management of educational services that address students' academic, social, and personal needs. Educational management integrates several interconnected components, including student affairs, curriculum, human resources, facilities,

finance, and special services. These components must function collaboratively to support educational goals and create an environment conducive to student development. Schools and madrasahs are therefore expected to provide more than knowledge transmission; they must also facilitate students' holistic development and academic achievement. Accordingly, systematically managed guidance and counseling services are important because they can help educational institutions respond to students' learning difficulties and support their academic progress.

Despite these expectations, students continue to experience academic challenges associated with differences in learning abilities, motivation, personal circumstances, and adjustment to school environments (Thiem & Dasgupta, 2022; Goyibova et al., 2025). These challenges indicate that classroom instruction alone may not adequately address all factors influencing academic achievement. Students may require additional assistance in identifying learning difficulties, developing effective study habits, strengthening motivation, and managing personal problems that interfere with learning. In this context, guidance and counseling services constitute an important component of student support within educational institutions. However, their contribution depends partly on how systematically the services are planned, organized, implemented, and monitored. Without clear programs, coordinated responsibilities, and continuous evaluation, counseling services may become reactive rather than responsive to students' actual needs. Therefore, examining the management of guidance and counseling as a special educational service is essential for understanding how schools can provide structured support for students' academic development.

This issue is particularly relevant at MTs Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung, a madrasah operating within a modern Islamic boarding school environment (Abdullah et al., 2025; Shofwani et al., 2025). Preliminary observations indicate that formal learning begins at 1:00 p.m., following the midday prayer, while the earlier schedule accommodates Qur'anic recitation, Islamic text study, and character-development activities. This integrated educational setting requires student services to be coordinated with both formal schooling and pesantren activities. Preliminary data also indicate that the average madrasah examination score increased from 78 in 2021 to 80 in 2022 and 2023, reaching 82 in 2024 and 2025. The graduation rate remained at 100% throughout the period. Although these figures suggest relatively stable academic performance, they do not establish that all students have overcome learning difficulties. Consequently, systematic counseling management remains important for maintaining academic achievement and addressing students' diverse educational needs.

Previous studies have examined how guidance and counseling management supports students' academic achievement (Hrisyov & Kostadinov, 2022; Crawford et al., 2024). Research conducted at other madrasahs has highlighted the importance of systematic service management involving planning, implementation, and evaluation. Other studies have discussed the contribution of assessment, group guidance, individual counseling, and information services to students' learning outcomes. Research has also emphasized program planning, stakeholder involvement, scheduled service implementation, evaluation, and monitoring. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that counseling services require organized procedures and sustained implementation to support academic development. However, previous studies have primarily emphasized service programs, counseling activities, and their relationship with student outcomes. Further examination is needed to understand how guidance and counseling are positioned and managed as a component of the broader educational management system, particularly through the interconnected managerial functions that shape service delivery.

Although existing research provides a foundation for understanding guidance and counseling services, an important research gap remains (Heinrich et al., 2023; Zamroni et al., 2022). The management of these services needs to be examined not only in terms of the activities provided to students but also through the institutional processes that determine how services are designed, coordinated, implemented, and supervised. This distinction is particularly important in madrasahs integrated with pesantren, where formal education and religious activities operate within the same institutional environment. The organizational characteristics of such institutions may influence service scheduling, coordination among educational personnel, and the identification of students' academic needs. Therefore, this study positions guidance and counseling within the framework of special educational service management. Its contribution lies in examining the relationship between managerial processes and the provision of academic support rather than evaluating the effectiveness of a particular counseling technique.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of guidance and counseling management through four managerial functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Rather than treating counseling as an isolated intervention, the study examines it as an organized educational service embedded in the institutional structure of a madrasah integrated with pesantren. This perspective enables a closer understanding of how student needs are identified, responsibilities are distributed, services are delivered, and implementation is monitored. The study also connects these managerial

processes with the practical objective of supporting students' academic achievement. This approach is important because academic performance should not be understood solely through examination results; it should also be considered in relation to the institutional support available to students. By focusing on the management process, the study offers a contextual understanding of how counseling services can be organized to respond to students' learning needs.

Based on this background, the study addresses the following research problem: how is the management of special guidance and counseling services implemented to support academic achievement at MTs Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung? The investigation focuses on planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling as the principal analytical dimensions. The central argument is that guidance and counseling services are more likely to provide structured academic support when student needs inform program planning, responsibilities are clearly coordinated, services are implemented according to established programs, and implementation is monitored systematically. These managerial processes are expected to help the madrasah identify students' learning difficulties, coordinate appropriate assistance, and maintain continuous attention to academic development. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the management of special guidance and counseling services and explain how their organization and implementation contribute to efforts to improve students' academic achievement.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore the management of special guidance and counseling services in supporting students' academic achievement (Heryuriani et al., 2025; Moriña & Biagiotti, 2022). This approach was appropriate for examining educational processes, institutional practices, and the experiences of individuals involved in service implementation. The analysis focused on four managerial functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, within the broader contexts of student affairs and special educational service management. The study was conducted at MTs Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung, located on Jalan Sultan Agung, Gang Raden Saleh No. 23, Kedaton, Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The site was selected because the madrasah integrates formal education with pesantren activities, offering a relevant context for investigating the management of educational support services.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Mardatillah et al., 2025; Widana et al., 2023). Semi-structured interviews involved the head of the madrasah, guidance and counseling teachers,

and students, using guidelines based on the four managerial functions and dimensions of counseling services. Observations focused on counseling activities, program implementation, staff coordination, and supervision. Documentation included institutional records, counseling program documents, reports, and students' academic achievement data. Supporting instruments comprised interview guidelines, observation sheets, an audio recorder, a camera, and field notes. Secondary data were obtained from existing documents and written records relevant to counseling service management and academic achievement.

Data analysis followed an interactive model comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Monaro et al., 2022; Jenkins et al., 2023). Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, and organizing information according to the research objectives and managerial functions. Data display presented the findings in descriptive narratives and thematic categories to identify patterns in planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision. Conclusions were drawn by interpreting emerging patterns and verifying them against the collected evidence. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation compared information from the head of the madrasah, counseling teachers, and students, while technique triangulation compared interview findings with observations and relevant documents. These procedures supported a comprehensive and credible understanding of how guidance and counseling services were managed to support students' academic achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Planning of Guidance and Counseling Services

The findings indicate that the planning of guidance and counseling services begins with the identification of students' needs. According to the counseling teacher, the assessment process follows the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Guidance and Counseling (Panduan Operasional Penyelenggaraan Bimbingan dan Konseling, POPBK). Several assessment techniques are used, including the Problem Disclosure Instrument (Alat Ungkap Masalah, AUM), questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The AUM and questionnaires are used to identify students' difficulties in personal, social, learning, and career-related areas, while interviews are conducted with students, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents to obtain additional information about students' circumstances. Observations focus on students' attendance, personal appearance, social interactions, and participation in classroom learning.

The information obtained through these assessment procedures is used to classify students' problems according to their respective areas of need and prioritize them based on their frequency and urgency. The counseling teacher

then uses the assessment results to prepare annual, semester, and monthly guidance and counseling programs. These programs include individual counseling, group counseling, and group guidance, depending on the needs identified among students. In the learning domain, the planned services address learning difficulties, low motivation, ineffective study habits, and other problems that may interfere with students' learning activities. The planning process therefore includes identifying students' needs, determining priorities, establishing service objectives, and selecting appropriate forms of assistance.

The findings also show that the madrasah provides facilities and materials to support the implementation of the planned services. These include a dedicated counseling room, assessment instruments, questionnaires, the AUM, Service Implementation Plans (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Layanan*, RPL), and instructional media. The counseling room is used for individual counseling, with attention to students' privacy and confidentiality. These facilities and materials form part of the resources prepared for delivering guidance and counseling services. However, differences emerged in the information provided by the head of the madrasah and the counseling teacher regarding the needs assessment process. The head of the madrasah described the guidance and counseling programs in general terms, whereas the counseling teacher explained the assessment instruments and procedures in greater detail.

Overall, the findings show that planning involves needs assessment, problem prioritization, program development, the determination of service objectives, and the preparation of supporting facilities and materials. The planning process addresses students' personal, social, learning, and career-related needs, with particular attention to difficulties that may affect their learning activities. The resulting programs are organized into annual, semester, and monthly plans, with service types selected according to the identified needs. The findings also indicate that the technical details of the planning process were described more explicitly by the counseling teacher than by the head of the madrasah.

Organizing Guidance and Counseling Services

The findings show that the organization of guidance and counseling services involves the counseling teacher, head of the madrasah, vice principal for student affairs, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents. The counseling teacher serves as the primary provider of guidance and counseling services, while the other stakeholders contribute information, coordination, and support according to their respective responsibilities. Homeroom teachers provide information about students' attendance and behavior, whereas subject teachers report concerns related to academic performance, assignment

completion, and classroom participation. Parents are involved when students' difficulties require information or support from the family environment. Information from these parties is used by the counseling teacher to identify student concerns and determine appropriate follow-up actions.

The findings further indicate that coordination among the stakeholders covers both academic and nonacademic aspects of students' development. Academic information includes changes in grades, difficulties completing assignments, and reduced classroom participation, while other information concerns attendance, motivation, behavior, and family circumstances. These different sources of information are considered when identifying students who require guidance and counseling services. The involvement of multiple parties allows information about students to be obtained from different educational and family settings. The coordination process is therefore reflected in the exchange of information and the involvement of relevant stakeholders in addressing students' needs.

Regarding the institutional structure, the head of the madrasah reported that the school has only one counseling teacher. In carrying out the services, the counseling teacher coordinates with the vice principal for student affairs, who subsequently coordinates with the head of the madrasah. This arrangement places the counseling teacher in the primary operational role, while the vice principal and head of the madrasah support coordination at the institutional level. The limited number of counseling personnel means that one teacher is responsible for addressing various student needs. Consequently, the delivery of services also involves communication and cooperation with other stakeholders who contribute information and support according to their responsibilities.

Overall, the organization of guidance and counseling services involves a division of responsibilities and coordination among school personnel and parents. Information from homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents contributes to the identification of students' academic, behavioral, and personal difficulties. The counseling teacher uses this information to determine appropriate services and follow-up actions. However, the organizational structure operates with only one counseling teacher, making coordination with other stakeholders an important part of the existing service arrangement.

Implementation of Guidance and Counseling Services

The findings indicate that guidance and counseling services are delivered through orientation services, information services, individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance. Orientation services are provided to new students through the Masa Ta'aruf Siswa Madrasah (Matsama) program, which introduces them to the madrasah environment, school rules, learning procedures, facilities, teachers, and staff. Information services address effective study methods, time management, achievement motivation, examination

preparation, and strategies for dealing with laziness and sleepiness during learning activities. Individual counseling and group counseling are provided according to students' needs and the problems identified by the counseling teacher. These services cover different aspects of students' educational experiences, including adjustment to the madrasah environment, learning difficulties, motivation, and behavioral concerns.

In implementing classroom guidance, the counseling teacher uses Service Implementation Plans (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Layanan*, RPL) as a reference for organizing activities. The methods and media include motivational videos, inspirational stories, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The materials are selected according to the planned service objectives and the needs identified through the assessment process. Individual counseling is conducted privately, with attention to students' confidentiality. The findings therefore document the use of structured plans, varied instructional methods, and supporting media in delivering the services.

Interviews with students provide additional information about their experiences with guidance and counseling services. Some students reported receiving counseling after behavioral violations, including leaving the school area without permission, using inappropriate language, disturbing classmates, and smoking. In these situations, the counseling teacher provided reprimands, warnings, and advice intended to prevent the recurrence of the behaviors. Students also reported experiencing low learning motivation and reluctance to study, although they did not consistently recall the specific interventions provided to address these difficulties. One student reported feeling helped by the counseling service and experiencing some behavioral change, although the change was not described as complete. These accounts show that students recalled different aspects of the services and reported varying levels of perceived change.

The observation findings provide additional information about the implementation of guidance and counseling services. The observed aspects of communication and motivation provided by the counseling teacher received a good rating, whereas the use of supporting resources received a fair rating. These results indicate that communication and motivational activities were rated more favorably than resource utilization in the observed service activities. The observation findings complement the interview data by documenting both the observed quality of communication and the assessment of resource use. However, the student interviews and observation results do not establish that all students experienced the same service outcomes.

Overall, the findings document the implementation of planned guidance and counseling activities through orientation, information provision, individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance. The services use structured plans, varied instructional methods, and supporting media, while

student accounts describe experiences related to behavioral violations and learning motivation. The observation results indicate good ratings for communication and motivation but a fair rating for resource utilization. Although some students reported perceived behavioral changes, the available findings do not establish a direct relationship between participation in guidance and counseling services and increases in academic scores.

Supervision of Guidance and Counseling Services

The findings indicate that supervision of guidance and counseling services involves monitoring students' development, evaluating service implementation and outcomes, documenting activities, and determining follow-up actions. The counseling teacher obtains information about students' progress from homeroom teachers and subject teachers. The information includes attendance, classroom participation, assignment completion, and academic performance. Monitoring is also supported by service records, daily journals, and service implementation reports. These sources provide information about students' conditions during the provision of services and their subsequent development.

The supervision process includes process evaluation and outcome evaluation. Process evaluation focuses on students' participation, understanding, enthusiasm, and the suitability of the methods and media used during counseling activities. Outcome evaluation examines changes following the provision of services, including behavioral development and academic progress. Academic monitoring may involve daily test scores, Mid-Semester Assessments (*Penilaian Tengah Semester*, PTS), and End-of-Semester Assessments (*Penilaian Akhir Semester*, PAS). Other indicators include assignment completion, classroom participation, and learning behavior. These indicators are used to monitor different aspects of students' development in relation to the services provided.

The head of the madrasah reported that monitoring also involves the use of instruments and student data. Monitoring may be conducted over a specified period, such as one month, or according to the needs identified. One indicator used to assess service outcomes is whether previously identified problematic behaviors recur after counseling. The madrasah also considers students' conditions before and after services are provided. The findings therefore indicate that supervision considers both the implementation of services and changes in students' conditions. Behavioral indicators, such as the recurrence of disciplinary violations, are considered alongside academic indicators, including assessment scores and other learning-related measures.

The observation results show that all three assessed aspects of supervision received a good rating. These aspects were monitoring service implementation, evaluating service implementation, and conducting follow-up or improvements based on evaluation results. The observation findings document the ratings assigned to these supervision practices. They complement the interview findings

concerning monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up procedures. However, the good ratings reflect the observed supervision practices and do not independently establish that students' academic achievement increased following counseling services.

The findings also show that supervision informs follow-up actions when identified problems remain unresolved. The counseling teacher may continue providing services or coordinate with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents. Documentation includes daily, monthly, semester, and case reports. When a problem cannot be addressed through the available services and collaboration, the case may be referred to another party with the appropriate expertise or authority. These procedures indicate that follow-up may involve continued counseling, coordination with relevant stakeholders, or referral, depending on the nature of the problem.

Overall, supervision encompasses monitoring, process and outcome evaluation, documentation, and follow-up. Information from teachers and service records is used to monitor students' attendance, classroom participation, assignment completion, behavior, and academic performance. Observation results indicate good ratings for the three assessed supervision aspects, while interview findings describe the procedures used to address unresolved problems. The available findings document the supervision process but do not establish that these procedures directly increased students' academic achievement.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the management of guidance and counseling services at MTs Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung operates through four management functions: planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision (Riswandha, 2026; Rosyid et al., 2024). These functions form an interconnected process that supports the identification of students' needs, coordination among educational stakeholders, delivery of appropriate services, and evaluation of student development. The findings suggest that guidance and counseling should not be viewed merely as activities for addressing student problems but as an integral component of educational management. The contribution of this study lies in demonstrating how management functions can be applied to organize student-support services within a pesantren-based madrasah. This context requires counseling services to address not only academic difficulties but also personal, social, and behavioral challenges that may influence students' participation in learning.

The planning process is based on identifying students' needs through problem identification instruments, questionnaires, interviews, and observations (Perez Canado et al., 2023; Brumann & Ohl, 2026). These techniques provide information about students' personal, social, learning, and career-related

difficulties, which is subsequently used to prioritize problems and develop annual, semester, and monthly programs. This finding demonstrates that planning is more meaningful when it begins with students' actual circumstances rather than relying solely on predetermined activities. However, the findings also reveal differences in the level of understanding of the planning process among institutional stakeholders. The counseling teacher explained the assessment procedures in detail, whereas the head of the madrasah provided a more general description of the programs. This situation suggests that technical planning remains concentrated at the practitioner level. The study therefore highlights the importance of shared planning documentation and institutional coordination to ensure that identified needs are translated into coherent and measurable service objectives.

The organizing function is reflected in collaboration among the counseling teacher, head of the madrasah, vice principal for student affairs, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents (Afandi et al., 2025; Ulfah, 2026). Each party contributes information or support according to their responsibilities and students' needs. This arrangement enables student difficulties to be examined from multiple perspectives, including attendance, classroom participation, assignment completion, learning motivation, and family circumstances. Nevertheless, the availability of only one counseling teacher presents a practical challenge because various student needs must be addressed within limited human resources. The findings indicate that coordination can help distribute information and facilitate follow-up, but collaboration alone cannot fully compensate for insufficient personnel. The distinctive insight of this study is that organizational coordination functions as a supporting mechanism for service continuity. Its effectiveness depends on clear responsibilities, timely information exchange, confidentiality, and consistent communication among the parties involved.

The implementation of guidance and counseling services includes orientation, information provision, individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance (Savitz-Romer & Nicola, 2022; Harefa, 2025). These activities address preventive, developmental, and responsive needs, including learning difficulties, low motivation, ineffective study habits, and behavioral problems. The use of lesson plans, motivational videos, discussions, and question-and-answer activities demonstrates an effort to adapt services to students' circumstances. However, students' experiences indicate that the outcomes of counseling are not always equally clear or sustained. Some students recalled receiving advice following behavioral violations, while others could not remember the details of interventions related to learning motivation. This difference suggests that the delivery of counseling activities does not

automatically guarantee lasting behavioral or academic changes. Therefore, service implementation needs to be accompanied by clearly defined objectives, student feedback, and systematic follow-up. These measures can help determine whether the services address students' immediate concerns and contribute to longer-term learning development.

Supervision is conducted through monitoring attendance, classroom participation, assignment completion, academic performance, and behavioral development (Dumitru et al., 2024; Mills, 2026). The evaluation process considers both service implementation and student outcomes, while follow-up actions are determined according to the problems identified. This approach demonstrates that supervision has a broader role than simply checking whether activities have been conducted; it also provides information for improving subsequent services. However, behavioral improvement and academic achievement must be interpreted as distinct outcomes. The absence of repeated disciplinary problems may indicate positive behavioral development, but it does not necessarily demonstrate improved academic performance. Likewise, changes in examination scores cannot independently establish that counseling services caused academic improvement. The findings therefore emphasize the importance of using indicators appropriate to each service objective. Consistent documentation of student progress, counseling activities, and academic development would provide a stronger basis for evaluating service effectiveness and determining which interventions require adjustment.

Viewed collectively, the four management functions form a continuous process in which students' needs inform planning, organizational coordination supports implementation, counseling activities address identified difficulties, and supervision informs follow-up (Pester Boyd et al., 2026; Yelamarthi et al., 2025). This relationship suggests that the quality of guidance and counseling services depends not only on individual counseling techniques but also on the consistency of the entire management process. The pesantren-based educational context adds an important dimension because students' academic experiences coexist with religious learning, character development, and institutional discipline. Consequently, counseling services need to consider the interaction between academic demands and students' personal, social, and behavioral circumstances. At the same time, the findings reveal that a structured management process may still encounter limitations, particularly insufficient counseling personnel, the uneven use of supporting resources, and the need for stronger documentation. Addressing these limitations would help ensure that service planning, implementation, and evaluation remain aligned with students' changing needs.

The principal contribution and novelty of this study lie in its integrated examination of guidance and counseling as a managed special educational service within a pesantren-based madrasah (Zahrah et al., 2025; Ihsanudin et al., 2026). Rather than examining planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision as separate administrative activities, the study connects them as a continuous process supporting student development. It also distinguishes the potential contribution of counseling services to academic achievement from evidence of direct academic improvement. Counseling may support achievement by addressing learning barriers, strengthening motivation, and developing more effective learning behaviors; however, these contributions cannot be assumed to produce higher academic scores without further evidence. This distinction provides a more cautious basis for evaluating service outcomes. The study consequently offers practical insights for strengthening coordination, clarifying service objectives, improving documentation, and developing measurable evaluation indicators. Future assessments should combine service records, documented student progress, and comparable academic data to examine outcomes more rigorously.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the management of guidance and counseling services at MTs Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung is implemented through four interconnected functions: planning based on students' needs, organizing through stakeholder collaboration, implementing preventive and responsive services, and supervising through monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up. The key lesson is that guidance and counseling are most meaningful when managed as a continuous institutional process rather than as isolated interventions for student problems. The study contributes to educational management scholarship by integrating these four functions within the context of a pesantren-based madrasah and highlighting how coordinated student support can address academic, personal, social, and behavioral needs. Its novelty lies in distinguishing the managerial processes that support academic development from evidence of direct improvements in academic achievement. However, the study is limited to one madrasah and relies on qualitative evidence that does not establish a causal relationship between counseling services and academic outcomes. Future research should examine multiple educational institutions, incorporate more systematic documentation and measurable indicators of student progress, and use longitudinal or mixed-methods designs to investigate how guidance and counseling management relates to changes in academic achievement over time.

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