

## **Profile of Competency Test Result and Its Implication on Strengthening Counselor Competency in South Sulawesi**

Abdullah Pandang, Soli Abimanyu, Alimuddin Mahmud & Sulaiman Samad

**Abstract.** This study is designed to find out the profile of school counselor competency test result and its implications for the development of competency program strengthening. The study used quantitative design combined with qualitative approach. Population of this research is school counselors who have followed competency test held by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2015 as many as 1949 people. 322 samples were taken using proportional random sampling technique with taking notice to the proportional representation of school counselors in junior high school, senior high school and vocational schools, and representation of 24 districts in South Sulawesi. The results concluded that the average counselor competency test value of the South Sulawesi schools on all aspects of core competency measured in the competency test is still far from the target of minimum competency standards set by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Based on the study findings, the main targets of competence which need to be improved by school counselors in South Sulawesi are pedagogical competence aspects and some aspects from professional competence. Grouping of the participants in the training needs to consider the age categories, length of work, educational background, and certification status.

Key Words: competence test, school counselor

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teacher plays an important role in the progression of a nation. That is why, one of the seven targets and imperatives for education after 2015, from UNESCO, in which the 6th target confirms: By 2030, all the governments ensure that all learners are taught by qualified, professionally trained, motivated and well-supported teachers (UNESCO, 2014).

In Indonesia, the school counselor professionalization has gained momentum since the issuance of Indonesian Republic Laws No. 14 Year 2005 about Teachers and Lecturers. In this regulation, teachers are established and formally recognized as professions. Thus, as part of educator in the school, the counselor is required to have qualifications and competencies that match the professional standards of the counseling field.

Regulation from the Minister of National Education No. 27 of 2008 about Academic Qualification Standard and Competency of Counselor which is stated that school counselors must have minimum educational qualifications name is graduate and master in four areas of competence, which are pedagogical competence, professional competence, personal competence, and social competence. Every school counselor is required to master these four areas of competency, either through teacher

professional education or through educational and training programs in teacher certification.

In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has conducted competency tests to all teachers in Indonesia. The competency test aims to (1) obtain a picture of teacher competence, especially pedagogic and professional competence in accordance with predetermined standards; (2) obtain a teacher competency map which will be the consideration in determining the type of education and training that teachers should follow in the teacher's development and professional development program; and (3) consideration of policy formulation in giving appreciation and appreciation to teachers (Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel, 2015). Teacher competency test (in Indonesia called Uji Kompetensi Guru, UKG) on 2015 measure of two field of competences that is pedagogic and professional.

The national average of the 2015 Teacher Competency Test (UKG) results for pedagogical and professional competence is still below from the minimum competency standard which is targeted nationally i.e. 53.02. The government was targeting the national average of 2015 UKG results by 55 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015). Specially for school counselors was only getting a mean score of 59.41 for high school counselors and 58.34 for vocational counselors (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, 2016). The result of this competency test is quite apprehensive and still far from the target of Minimum Competency Standard in Strategic Plan of Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel (2016), which is reaching 80 at the end of 2019.

It is deemed necessary to examine in more detail about the various competence achievements of school counselors on every aspect of competence which become the standards of professional competence. Based on this study, it is possible to identify competency areas that require further strengthening and design a more appropriate strategy to strengthen these competencies.

## THEORY OVERVIEW AND PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

As professional educators, school counselors are required to master competence according to the competence standards of Indonesian counselor profession. In Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 27 Year 2008 About Academic Qualification Standards and Counselor Competencies, there are four areas of competence that need to be mastered by school counselors in Indonesia, namely, pedagogical competence, professional competence, personal competence, and social competence. In the teacher competency test organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, it only examines two competency aspects, namely pedagogical competence and professional competence. The core competencies described in the competency test for school counselors can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Core Competencies Measured in a School Counselor Competency Test

Main Competency	Core Competence
<b>Pedagogic</b>	1) mastering educational theory and praxis
	2) applying physiological and psychological development and counselor behavior
	3) mastering the essence of guidance and counseling services in the path, type, and level of educational unit
<b>Professional</b>	4) mastering the concepts and praxis of the assessment to understand the condition, needs, and problems of the counselor
	5) mastering guidance and counseling theoretical and praxis framework
	6) designing Guidance and Counseling program
	7) Implement a comprehensive Guidance and Counseling program
	8) assess the process and results of Guidance and Counseling activities
	9) have awareness and commitment to professional ethics
	10) master the concepts and praxis of research in guidance and counseling

School counselors have unique training needs that are different from the clinical mental health counselors (Kozlowski and Huss, 2013). They must be prepared to perform functions in various roles to guide all students on various aspects such as emic, career, and social / personal development (Studer & Oberman, 2006).

The results of the analysis conducted by the General Directorate of Teachers and Education Personnel on the 2015 teacher competence test results (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, 2016), show the national average score is 56.69 (0-100 score scale). This average is slightly above the minimum competency standard targeted at 55.00.

If viewed from the distribution area based on the provinces in Indonesia, from 33 provinces there are only 10 (ten) provinces that their value is above the national average. The eight provinces are Yogyakarta, Central Java, Jakarta, East Java, Bali, Bangka Belitung, West Java, West Sumatra, Riau Islands and South Kalimantan. South Sulawesi itself is ranked 18th with mean of UKG is 52,55. When viewed from the educational level, the highest average UKG from the national

average value gained by senior high school teachers (61,74), followed by kindergarten teacher (59,65), vocational school teacher (58,83), junior high school teachers (58,25), elementary school teachers (54,33) and the teacher of school for children with special needs (53,78) (Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel, 2016).

The analysis results also showed that there was a tendency for the UKG score to follow the linear age line of the participants where the highest score was achieved in the 41-45 year age period, then decreased sharply after that period. It is also seen that the average of female teacher's UKG appears to be higher than male teachers' result by the age of 31 years, but after that the results of female teachers' UKG tend to be lower than male's. (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, 2016)

Further mapping results indicate that the teacher's UKG result who have attended and passed the certification is higher than who have not passed the certification. In terms of educational qualifications, it appears that the higher teacher education qualifications, the higher their UKG results. The result of UKG mapping according to field of study shows the achievement of the average of counselor UKG result from high school teacher was slightly higher than vocational school teacher (Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel, 2016).

Chang, *et al.* (2014) show that the educator certification policy in Indonesia has given a positive impact in increasing interest for teaching profession, encouraging teachers to improve their qualifications and motivating teachers to be more productive. Nevertheless, performance outcomes between teachers who have been and have not been certified through the series of examinations in 2009, 2011, and 2012 show no significant differences between teachers who have and have not been certified. There are only two indicators that indicate a meaningful change in the declining tendency of teachers that are seeking additional employment and declining financial problems to support household financing.

Saripuddin's research (2014) concluded that the professional competence of vocational school teachers in Bandung, West Bandung Regency, and Sumedang Regency are influenced significantly by the principal's leadership, the teacher's attitude toward the profession, and the teacher's work motivation.

Research related to school counselors' competency is reported by Lestari, *et al* (2013). From the Lestari *et al* study results, It is obtained an illustration that the professional competence of school counselors in the implementation of school counselor services in Junior High School of Cilacap city is high, which are consisting of variables mastered concepts and praxis counseling assessment to understand the condition, needs, and problems of counseling, to master theoretical framework and praxis guidance counseling, to design guidance and counseling programs, to assess the process and outcomes of school counselors activities, and to have awareness and commitment to professional ethics.

Jumail Research (2013) about Professional Competence in Counselor Perspective and Its Role on Guidance and Counseling Service in Senior High School in Padang showed the overall result reaches a very high criterion. In addition, the research conducted by Istiqomah (Lestari, *et al*, 2013) about Counselor Professionalization

showed that the level of competence from 26 of 30 high school counselor of all Rembang District also has a medium criterion.

According to school counselor perspective on professional competency in counseling services, Malik and Kurniawan (2015) in their research indicated that the level understanding of high school counselor in Pemalang District by 2014/2015 at professional conferences in the service of counseling guidance is in the high category (71%).

From a variety of studies that have been done before, there are a number of factors affecting the teacher and school counselor competency, including: gender and age (Anbuthasan and Balakrishnan, 2013), work experience (Yon, 1991; Ismanto, 2007; Moyer and Yu, 2010); educational background (Ismanto, 2007; Mustaqim, 2013); Syaikhul Alim, 2010; Ivanova and Skara-Mincane, 2016), certification (Darling-Hammond, et al, 2005; Bond, 1998; and Chang, et al. 2014), and principal leadership, teacher attitudes toward the profession, and teacher work motivation (Saripuddin (2014).

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study aims to determine (1) a description of the results of school counselor's competency test in South Sulawesi, particularly from the general achievements of pedagogical guidance and professional competence and achievements in 10 core competencies; and (2) competency strengthening program framework for school counselors in South Sulawesi.

Population of this study is school counselor in South Sulawesi Province who were following 2015 competency test, which are 1,949 people. Total sample was determined based on Krejcie & Morgan standard (1970) by 95% confidence standard and 5% margin error, so as to get 322 samples or 16,22% from population. Determination of the sample using proportional-random-sampling technique, i.e. taking random samples in proportional amounts (16.22% each) representing sub-population and/or study category, such as district/city, educational level (junior high school 173 people, high school as many as 100, and vocational school as many as 49 people).

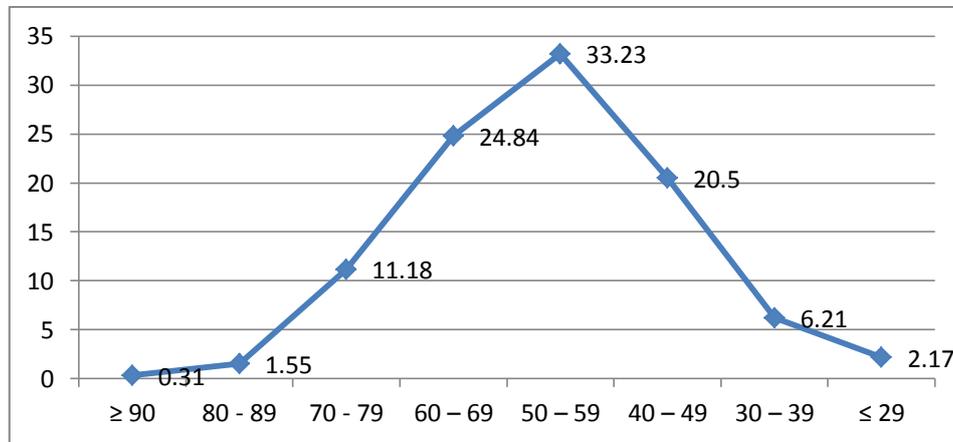
Data from school counselor competence test result were obtained from Directorate General of Teacher and Education Personnel. In-depth information was done by interviewing and focus group discussion. Data analysis includes descriptive analysis, qualitative analysis, and inferential statistical analysis with multiple regression analysis techniques.

## **STUDY RESULT**

### **1. Profile of School Counselor Competency Test Result**

The analysis results show that the average score of school counselor's competency test (UKG) achieved by 322 School Counselors sample is 56.10. The results of the analysis as summarized in Figure 1 which also show that the highest number of school counselors earn a UKG score between 50 - 59. There are only 6 persons (1.85%) of School Counselors from samples who have score  $\geq 80$ , while those who score below 50 are 28,88%, among them seven people (2.17%) score

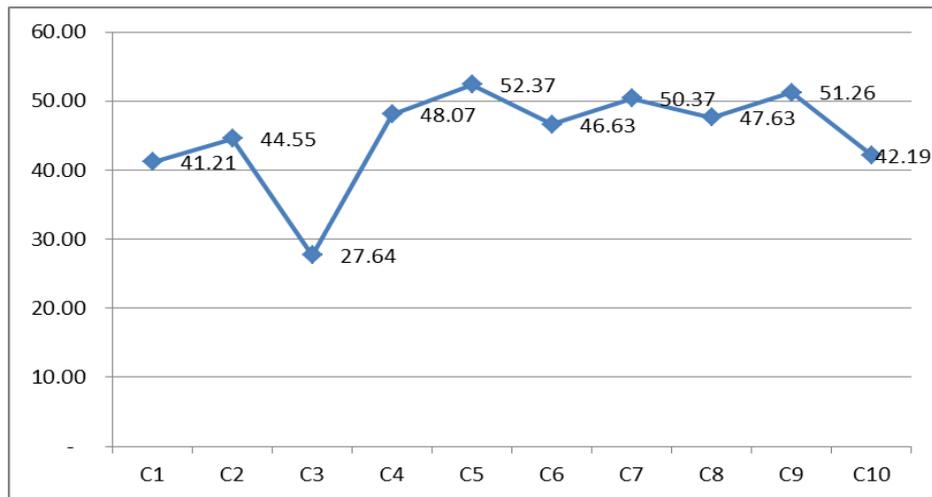
below 29. Participants who are passing standard of graduation score of UKG which is 55,00 as many as 174 people (54.04%), and who meet the graduation standard 65.00 are 80 people (24.84%).



**Figure 1 graphs Percent School Counselor According to the UK G.**

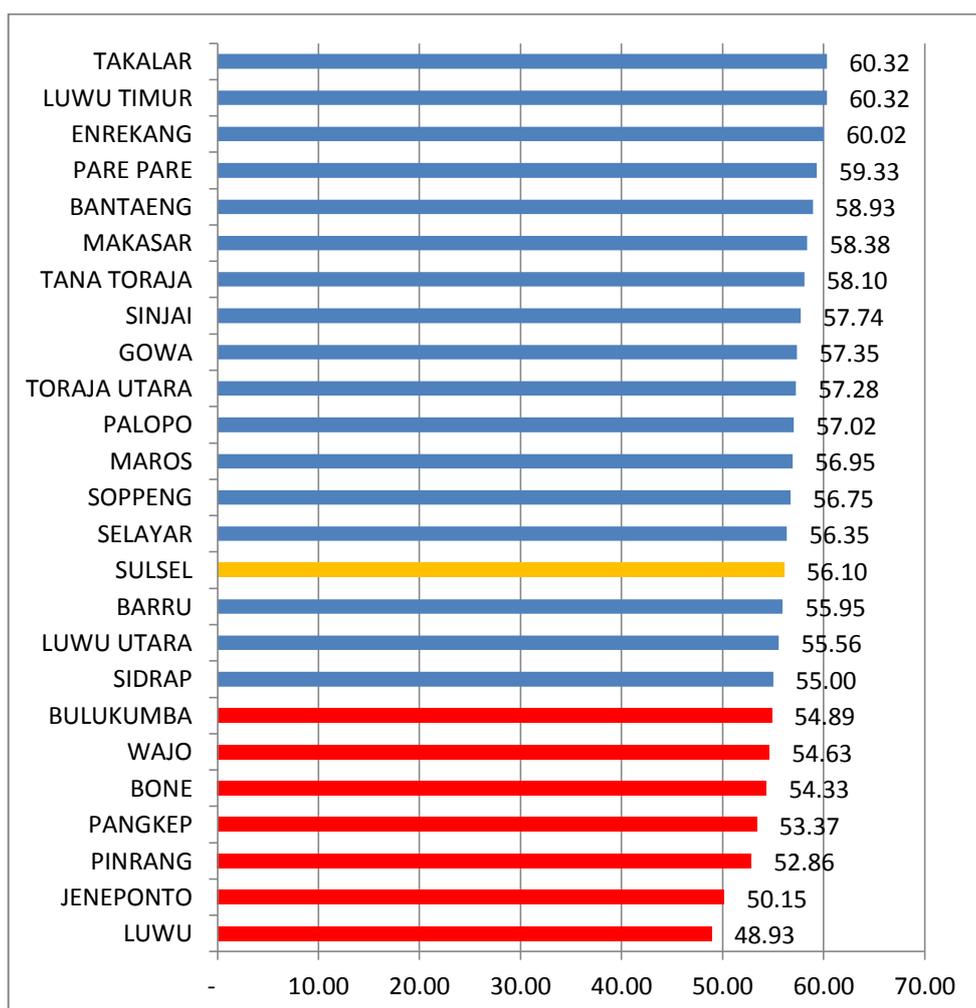
Furthermore, the UKG outcomes in the 10 components of core competence show a varied picture. Components related to the three core competencies (C) of pedagogical competence, C1, C2, and C3 show the same results according to the achievement score of pedagogical competence itself. The core competencies of C-1 ( Mastering theory and education praxis ) scored only 41,21 in average with a range of achievements between 0 (not true) and 100 (all true); C2 core competency (Applying physiological and psychological development and counselee behavior ) with an average score of 44,55 ; and C3 (Mastering the essence of counseling and guidance services in the path, type, and level of educational unit ), with a mean score is 27,64. This indicates that the school counselor's understanding level to the core competency components of pedagogy is quite low . In the three core competencies of pedagogy, the achievement of the scores of participants has a very wide range of randomness, i.e. from 0 and the highest reaches a score is 100. This indicates that there is high variability of understanding among school counselors.

In the core competency component which is the description of the main competency aspect of professionals, namely C4 ( Mastering the concept and praxis of assessment to understand the condition, needs, and problem of the counselee ), C5 ( Mastering the theoretical framework and praxis guidance and counseling ), C6 ( Designing Guidance and Counseling program ), C7 ( Implementing the separate program Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling), C8 (Assessing the process and the results of Guidance and Counseling), C9 (Possessing awareness and commitment to professional ethics), and C10 (Mastering the concept and praxis of research in guidance and counseling), in average shows achievements which is slightly better compared to the other core competencies pedagogy. Average score achievement range was between 42,19 (C10) and 52,37 (C5). Big picture of UKG on 10 core competencies can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 Graph of Average Score of UKG on 10 Core Competencies**

The competency test result from 24 districts/cities in South Sulawesi showed the achievement on a varying score. Nevertheless, the average scores of all districts only moved around and with deviations not far from the provincial average score which is 56,10. Furthermore, an acquisition sequence UKG score among the districts from the highest mean score to lowest mean score can be seen in Figure 3. In terms of 2015 Minimum Competency Standars standard scores i.e. 55.00, there are seven districts where the average value of the competency test does not reach it (red). However, if viewed from the 2017 Minimum Competency Standars that is 65.00, then all districts/cities in South Sulawesi show achievement score of UKG are under the standard score.



**Figure 3 Achievements of UKG by Regency / City**

## **2. Proposed on the framework of strengthening competency program**

Based on FGD results and interviews that have been done, obtained several thoughts and proposals related to the program of strengthening competence that is considered suitable and for school counselors in schools.

From the results of the interview and FGDs that have been made, the form of reinforcing competency that wanted by counselor school, includes the following characteristics:

**First**, the form of **product-oriented** training or produce a device that will be used in schools. This model is considered appropriate because participants are usually more active and serious when targeted to produce documents or materials for use in school. Participants training is usually lazy to read and listen to lectures, but can be active if assigned to prepare certain product, such as preparing instruments, making program operational plans, etc.

**Second**, a training model that uses an *in-on-in system*, where participants follow the strengthening of competencies such as from workshop meetings followed by field practice. Respondents who assessed the training model which is used in the implementation training of Curriculum 2013 are very helpful to strengthen for their understanding. Curriculum 2013 training model that was done gradually that is gathered to follow the training, then continued with practice in each school, then meet again to discuss each other, that considered very helpful school counselor to really master thoroughly what is trained.

**Third**, school counselors also assess the competence strengthening community-based model on school counselor group discussion (in Indonesia called Musyawarah Guru Bimbingan Konseling, MGBK) as an appropriate way. According to the respondents, school counselors' training needs to involve MGBK so that trained materials can be followed up to share with school counselors. MGBK could become container for school counselor to learn and share experiences.

**Fourth**, the strengthening of competence along with **field assistance** in schools is also very helpful in mastering competence. This model is judged to be the exact cause through direct mentoring from instructors in schools, discussions about the conditions and practical problems that commonly affect the implementation of new skills in the practice of schooling

**Fifth**, resource and instructor who is considered the best in strengthening the activities of school counselor competence are a combination of experts from universities and field instructors. Resources from university experts are needed to provide a theory or conceptual perspective on student issues. Even better if the expert has the insight or experience related to the implementation of counseling guidance in the field. Instructors from school counseling guidance or school counselors are also helpful, as they also face the same problem making it easier to discuss about experience. In addition, they can also more easily provide time.

**Sixth**, strengthening the competence of school counselors need to **involve the school principal** and subject teachers as participants. This method is deemed necessary to enable principals and subject teachers to understand the issues and scope of the tasks of school counselors so that they can provide a support in the implementation of counseling services to students.

## **DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

The achievement of counselor competency test result in South Sulawesi with average of 56.10 is still below the national achievement of test result of teacher competence, equal to 56,69 (Surapranata, 2016) and national average of counselor competence test result, that is 59.41 for high school counselor and 58.34 for vocational school counselor (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, 2016). The achievement of competency test result of South Sulawesi counselor is also still far from the target set by Strategic Plan of Ministry of Education and Culture (2016), with minimum competency standard of 2016 = 65, 2017 = 70, 2018 = 75, and 2019 = 80. This indicates the need for endeavor to improve the competence of counselors in South Sulawesi.

Based on the results of the analysis that has been done, it can be put forward several implications that can be made in the development of competence strengthening program for school counselors, especially in South Sulawesi.

**a. Target priority strengthening competence**

Considering the school counselor’s UKG results in South Sulawesi on the 10 core competency components which are the description of pedagogical competence and professional competence all show scores that have not been maximized, the target of school counselor's strengthening competence should cover all 10 core competencies. However, priority attention needs to be given to strengthening core competence competencies (C1, C2, and C3) as they all show very low scores. If priority is made, then based on the achievement of school counselors on the 10 core competencies, it can be arranged the order of competence targets that need to be addressed, as in Table 2.

**Table 2 Priority Sequence Aspects of Competence Needs Strengthening**

No	Aspect	Content of core competencies
1.	C3	: Mastering the essence of guidance and counseling services in the path, type, and level of education unit
2.	C1	: Mastering the theory and praxis of education
3.	C2	: Applying physiological and psychological development and counselee behavior
4.	C10	: Mastering the research concepts and praxis in guidance and counseling
5.	C6	: Designing a Guidance and Counseling program
6.	C8	: Assess the process and results of Guidance and Counseling activities
7.	C4	: Master the concept and praxis of the assessment to understand the condition, needs, and problems of the counselee
8.	C7	: Implement a comprehensive Counseling and Counseling program
9.	C9	: Have an awareness and commitment to professional ethics
10.	C5	: Master the theoretical framework and praxis guidance and counseling

**b. Grouping of participants**

According to the finding appropriate data analysis, grouping the participants to strengthen the capacity need to be considering several factors, such as the variable group, sub-group priorities that need to be brakede dial, and aspects of core competencies that need to be addressed. Consideration of the grouping of competency-strengthening participants according to the aspect of the participant variable category, presented in Table 3.

**Table 3 Map of School Counselor Grouping in Strengthening Competence**

No	Group Factor Consideration	Sub-Groups that need to be remedial Priority	Priority of core competencies to be addressed
1)	Age	age $\geq$ 51 years old	C3, C1, C10, C2,
2)	Years of experience	Work period $\geq$ 30 years	C3, C1, C10
3)	Educational qualifications	Education $<$ S1	C3, C10, C2, C6, C8,
4)	Background of course	Non-Guidance Counseling graduates	C3, C1, C10
5)	Certification status	Not certified yet	C3, C1, C10
6)	District / city	Luwu, Jeneponto, Pinrang, Pengkep, Bone, Wajo	C3, C10, C2, C1

**c. Strengthening competency strategy**

The development program of continuous professional development for strengthening the competence of school counselors, at least have the following strategy characteristics:

**1) Product oriented**

Strengthening the competence of product-oriented is a form of education and training that is characterized by the work process and directed to produce a product. This model applies the principle of *project-based learning*. According Delise (1997: 27-35), there are 6 steps Project Based Learning, which are: "*Connecting with the problem, setting up the structure, Visiting the problem, Revisiting the problem, producing a product / performance, and Evaluating performance and the problem.*"

Implementation form of product-oriented training is commonly known as *workshop*. In general, workshop is a meeting among professionals to discuss about practical issues or those concerned with the implementation in the field of profession, or workshops, and meetings are scientific on a small scale.

**2) Using the In-On-In system.**

In-On-In System is a model of competence survive strengthening and combining process **In Service Training (inclusive)** or face-to-face activities with all participants to obtain the required competencies, and **On the Job**

**Training (On)**, the practice of applying the training results to the real context in the field. The number of In-On-on-on stages depends on the need. The more the stages, the more deeply competence of trainer.

According to *Heathfield (2016)*, *model On-the-job training (OJT)* is a form of training that teaches the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed by workers to perform a specific task at the work. Worker learns in an environment where they need to practice knowledge and skills gained from the training. OJT utilizes instruments, tools, materials, documents, tools, knowledge and skills in the workplace to help workers to learn more effectively in performing their job duties.

### 3) **Field-based mentoring**

To maximize the implementation of *On-the-job training*, school counselors in the field need a presence of direct assistance from a resource or instructors. Through this assistance, school counselors are directly guided to make the expected product or practice the skills acquired.

### 4) **Community-based MGBK**

Community-based training is also known as *Study groups*. According to Burns (2011), teachers can benefit from discussions and interactions with other teachers on specific issues. In group studies, teachers collaborate, as a large group or smaller team, to examine a particular issue with the aim of addressing common problems that occur or developing and implementing a plan for achieving a goal. Study activities, such as reading, discussing, writing and reflecting, directed by trained facilitators, are a key component of group study. During the review process, they can use the source of the pads, the class materials (such as the work the students produced), and their experiences as part of their approach to the problems at hand.

Community-based training can take advantage of school counselor group discussion (MGBK) which is available at every level in each district/city. Empowerment of MGBK is expected to support optimum improvement of professional ability of school counselor in school. Efforts to empower are done to further intensify the activities of these forums in improving the quality of teachers (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010).

### 5) **Resources or instructors' combinations of experts and practitioners**

The resource or instructor is the decisive part in organizing the strengthening of competence. In order to strengthen the competence of school counselors, the resource and the structures should be competent and qualified in the counseling guidance field and have sufficient experience and insight on the praxis of counseling guidance in schools. The combination of experts from colleges, in this case lecturers from counseling guidance courses, and instructors from trained school counselors are suggested by school counselors in the field. Experts from universities are expected to provide a theoretical perspective and conceptual explanation of student issues and the appropriate form of service for them. While field instructors from trained school counselors play an important role to become study companions who can provide practical guidance in applying the concepts given by counseling experts from universities.

## CONCLUSION

The results of competency test for school counselors in South Sulawesi are still far from the minimum competency standard targeted by the Ministry of Education and Culture, at the end of 2019, which is 80.00. All aspects of the 10 core competencies of counselor received a low score. Thus, it takes great effort to provide various educational and training activities to improve the competence of school counselors.

Based on the results of the study, it is deemed necessary to give more serious attention to the strengthening of school counselor capacity in South Sulawesi for the effectiveness and improvement of education service quality in schools. Need to achieve a system of continuous professional development in the field of counseling a more comprehensive and coherent, involving *active learning-oriented* model of the product with field assistance accompanied by experts and practitioners in the field of counseling.

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