

MODERNIZING MENTAL HEALTH: THE ROLE, ETHICS, AND COMPETENCIES OF COUNSELING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Syifa Nurul Maola*, Fitri Andela, Rifa Alifah Salsabila, Nazwa Syifa Syairani,
Annisa Dwi Rizqia, Popy Mayasari Afendy

Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

*Corresponding author, e-mail: syifanrlm15@upi.edu

Abstract: This article critically re-examines the modernization of counselling in the digital age, arguing that technology is not merely an auxiliary tool but a disruptive force that threatens to redefine the foundations of therapeutic practice. Using a systematic literature review, 38 primary sources were analysed: 31 peer-reviewed journal articles, 4 academic books, and 3 professional guidelines selected through PRISMA-based screening from Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate (2008–2025). The findings indicate that tele-counselling, counselling applications, and AI-assisted interventions significantly expand access and offer flexible, data-driven mental health support. However, the evidence also reveals an ethical paradox: while digital platforms claim to democratise psychological services, they simultaneously increase vulnerability to privacy violations, algorithmic bias, and emotional disconnection. Particularly for adolescents, technology-mediated counselling correlates with emerging risks, including social media addiction, cyberbullying trauma, and digital isolation that paradoxically require the very counselling services the platforms aim to provide. These results challenge the assumption that technological innovation inherently improves counselling outcomes and suggest that the profession may be approaching a critical inflexion point: counsellors must develop digital competencies or risk being replaced by artificial systems incapable of empathy. The study concludes that technology can strengthen mental health services only if strict ethical safeguards, digital literacy, and a reaffirmation of the therapeutic alliance as the non-negotiable core of counselling guide its integration.

Keywords: data privacy; digital counselling; digital ethics; mental health; technology in counselling; telecounselling

INTRODUCTION

Counselling is a form of psychological intervention rooted in the therapeutic relationship between counsellor and client. This relationship is key to the process of change, as emphasised by various approaches such as Person-Centered Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which emphasise empathy, reflection, and cognitive restructuring as the core of therapeutic success (Richards & Viganó, 2013). However, the development of digital technology in the last decade has fundamentally influenced counselling practice. Innovations in the form of online services, mental health applications,

and interventions based on virtual reality and artificial intelligence open up new opportunities in expanding access, while challenging traditional understandings of the counselling relationship (Andersson et al., 2018).

Digital transformation allows counselling services to no longer be limited to face-to-face interactions, but can be conducted through telecounselling, mobile-based counselling applications, and even interventions based on artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality. Research indicates that the use of digital technology in mental health services can expand service reach, reduce geographical barriers, and offer more affordable and personalized interventions, aligning with the core objectives of guidance and counselling in providing psychological, social, academic, and career support to individuals (Torous et al., 2025).

In line with this, developments in information and communication technology over the past few decades have changed the landscape of mental health service provision, from traditional face-to-face services to a range of digital services, including online counselling, self-help applications, and internet-based psychological interventions. The World Health Organization identifies digital technology as a key strategy for achieving broader, more inclusive mental health service coverage, particularly by addressing geographical barriers, workforce limitations, and social stigma that restrict access to care (WHO, 2021).

Despite these advantages, integrating technology into counselling services also presents significant challenges. Issues related to data privacy, information security, and the digital divide require serious attention, particularly to ensure ethical and responsible practices. Moreover, the effectiveness of digital interventions must be continuously evaluated in comparison with traditional counselling approaches to ensure their appropriateness in educational and professional contexts, as studies indicate that while digital interventions can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, their implementation necessitates clear ethical standards and regulatory frameworks (APA, 2024; Horwitz et al., 2024).

The integration of technology has also influenced both the effectiveness of counselling interventions and the educational paradigm for prospective counsellors. Counsellor competence in the digital era extends beyond mastery of traditional counselling techniques to include technology-based communication skills and an understanding of online interaction dynamics, given that digital media can affect the quality of the counsellor-client relationship. Nevertheless, the success of counselling remains strongly dependent on the quality of the therapeutic alliance, requiring counsellors to maintain warmth, empathy, and trust regardless of whether counselling is conducted face-to-face or through digital platforms (Anthony & Nagel, 2011).

The experience during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that school counsellors must quickly adapt to online services. This adaptation includes individual counselling via video or telephone, group counselling, and digital platform-based preventive interventions. International studies on tele-mental health for children, adolescents, and students identify significant opportunities to maintain the continuity of school services. However, challenges such as limited access to devices and the internet, student privacy and data security, and the need to improve counsellors' digital competencies have also emerged in its implementation (Marraccini et al., 2024). Therefore, integrating technology into guidance and counselling practices requires an approach that considers technical, ethical, and pedagogical aspects.

In the context of guidance and counselling in schools and communities, the use of technology can strengthen basic services, responsiveness, and individual student planning. For example, the use of online counselling applications can help counsellors reach students who are reluctant to come to the counselling room. At the same time, digital platforms enable student needs assessments to be carried out more quickly and systematically (Löchner, 2025). Therefore, technology serves as a supporting medium that expands the scope of counselling services without reducing the essence of the interpersonal relationship between counsellor and counselee.

Thus, integrating technology into counselling and mental health practices is an important issue that requires sustained academic and practical attention. The complexity of the opportunities and challenges involved underscores the urgency of scholarly engagement, collaboration, and innovation in developing technology-enhanced counselling practices that remain relevant, inclusive, and effective in responding to contemporary societal dynamics. In response to these conditions, the present article adopts a systematic literature review approach to comprehensively examine the integration of digital technology within contemporary counselling and mental health practices, as systematic literature reviews are widely used in social and educational research to synthesise empirical evidence, map dominant themes, and identify conceptual and practical gaps in rapidly evolving fields (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008).

Consistent with the challenges and opportunities outlined above, this review focuses on three interrelated aspects: the forms and roles of digital technology in modern counselling services; ethical and privacy issues related to technology-based counselling; and the digital competencies required of counsellors to ensure that technology-enhanced services remain practical, ethical, and client-centred. Through this focused review, the article seeks to provide an integrative understanding of how counselling practices can adapt to digital transformation without losing their foundational therapeutic values, while offering evidence-based insights for counsellors, educators, and policymakers in addressing the demands of the digital era (Anthony & Nagel, 2011; Barnett & Kolmes, 2016).

METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine the impact of the digital era on adolescent mental health and its implications for contemporary counseling practice. The review process was conducted through three explicitly defined stages, namely planning, conducting, and reporting, to ensure methodological transparency and replicability. The review was guided by the framework *Modernizing Mental Health: The Role, Ethics, and Competencies of Counseling in the Digital Age*, which emphasizes the application of technology in counseling, ethical and privacy considerations, and the digital competencies required by counselors. The scope of the review focused on adolescent mental health issues in digital contexts, including social media addiction, cyberbullying, digital isolation, and technology-based counseling interventions.

Planning Stage

In the planning stage, the researchers defined the research topic, scope, and search boundaries in line with the study objectives. A systematic, focused literature review was adopted, focusing on adolescent mental health in digital environments and its relevance to counseling practice. The literature search strategy used Google Scholar as the primary search engine, as it aggregates publications from a wide range of academic publishers and journals. Through this process, articles published by major scientific publishers, including ScienceDirect, were accessed. In addition, ResearchGate was utilized as an academic repository to retrieve full-text versions of relevant articles, particularly when direct access through publishers was limited.

Predefined keywords included adolescent mental health, social media addiction, cyberbullying, digital isolation, and online counseling. These keywords were combined using Boolean operators such as AND and OR, for example, adolescent mental health AND social media, adolescent mental health AND cyberbullying, social media addiction OR digital isolation, and online counseling AND adolescents. The use of Boolean operators was intended to systematically refine the search strategy by narrowing results through the AND operator and broadening the scope through the OR operator, thereby ensuring both relevance and comprehensive coverage of the literature.

The publication criteria applied at this stage included a publication year range from 2008 to 2025, publications written in English or Indonesian, full text accessibility, and source types limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and official documents or guidelines issued by recognized professional organizations.

Conducting Stage

In the conducting stage, the literature search was conducted in January 2024 using the predetermined search strategy. The initial search yielded 49 records, representing the complete reference pool identified for this study. Article selection followed a structured screening process aligned with the PRISMA framework, involving an initial screening of titles and abstracts followed by a full-text assessment based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. In accordance with the PRISMA flow framework, the identification, screening, and eligibility processes were systematically applied to ensure transparency in study selection.

The inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed journal articles presenting empirical findings or theoretical discussions, conceptual papers, policy documents, or seminal works related to mental health and counseling; a focus on adolescents aged 12 to 19 years; explicit engagement with digital contexts such as social media use, online interaction, or digital counseling services; and relevance to mental health outcomes, including social media addiction, cyberbullying, and digital isolation. The exclusion criteria included studies focusing on non-adolescent populations, non-academic sources such as opinion articles, theses, or dissertations, and publications addressing purely technical aspects of digital technology without psychosocial or counseling implications.

From the initial pool of 49 references, the screening process prioritized sources that were directly aligned with the article's title and analytical focus. As a result, 31 peer-reviewed

journal articles were selected as the primary corpus for thematic analysis. In addition, 4 academic books and 3 professional or policy guidelines were retained as supporting references to strengthen the theoretical framework, ethical perspective, and contextual understanding of digital counseling practices. In total, 38 sources were included in the core analysis, while the remaining references were used to support background information and methodological justification.

Reporting Stage

In the reporting stage, a narrative synthesis was conducted to integrate findings from the selected sources. The analysis involved systematically summarizing, comparing, and interpreting the literature to identify dominant themes, patterns, and research gaps. The synthesis was structured around three primary themes, namely social media addiction, digital isolation, and cyberbullying. Beyond identifying associated risks, the analysis also explored ethical considerations, privacy issues, and evidence-based counseling strategies relevant to digital practice. The review report followed the final stage of the PRISMA framework, ensuring that the synthesis of findings was based on a clearly documented, reproducible selection process. Based on the synthesized evidence, practical implications and recommendations were formulated to support the development of effective, ethical, and contextually appropriate counseling interventions in digital environments.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. The Role of Technology in Modern Counselling

The role of technology in modern counseling should not be viewed merely as a technical innovation, but rather as a paradigm shift in how counseling services are delivered. This transformation rests on three interconnected pillars: tele-counseling, counseling applications, and digital media. Tele-counseling, for instance, functions not simply as a substitute for face-to-face sessions but as a structured counseling practice conducted through clearly defined stages, including informed consent, initial assessment, intervention, evaluation, and follow-up in an online setting. Its implementation requires counselors to adapt therapeutic communication skills, establish rapport in virtual environments, and uphold professional ethics, particularly regarding confidentiality and data security. Empirical studies indicate that tele-counseling is especially effective for clients facing geographical barriers, time constraints, or emergency conditions such as the pandemic, with outcomes comparable to in-person counseling when professional standards are consistently applied (Ramadhan & Irfanudin, 2021; Barak et al., 2008). In the Indonesian context, online counseling has also been implemented to address bullying among adolescents, although challenges remain in fostering emotional closeness and ensuring client data protection (Mansyur et al., 2019).

Beyond telecounseling, the development of counseling applications has significantly expanded access to mental health services in a more sustainable, self-directed manner. In practice, these applications are not limited to instant consultation platforms; they are increasingly integrated as supportive tools within the counseling process. Features such as daily emotional monitoring, guided emotion regulation exercises, and coping skill

reinforcement allow clients to continue therapeutic work beyond formal counseling sessions. Global platforms such as Calm, Headspace, and Talkspace, alongside Indonesian applications like KALM and Riliv, demonstrate how technology can provide flexible, personalized, and responsive mental health support. Research suggests that the use of counseling applications enhances client engagement, extends the impact of therapeutic interventions, and assists counselors in conducting ongoing, data-informed assessments (Fitzpatrick et al., 2017; Elpas, 2020). Within educational settings, school counselors may integrate these applications into personal and social guidance services, particularly to reach students who are reluctant to seek help through conventional counseling channels.

Digital media and social networking platforms further reinforce these two pillars by offering spaces for psychoeducation, advocacy, and peer support. In counseling practice, digital media are commonly utilized to disseminate mental health information, promote preventive interventions, and facilitate online support communities under professional supervision. Adolescents, as digital natives, often feel more comfortable expressing psychological concerns in online environments, especially when anonymity and social safety are perceived to be present (Habibah, 2025). However, the effectiveness of digital media in counseling practice depends largely on counselors' ability to curate accurate content, guide healthy interactions, and strengthen clients' digital literacy to prevent exposure to misinformation and maladaptive norms. Previous studies caution that, in the absence of professional guidance, digital platforms may amplify biased information and exacerbate specific psychological difficulties (Naslund et al., 2016).

Taken together, these three technological pillars operate synergistically to shape a more inclusive and adaptive mental health service ecosystem. Tele-counseling addresses spatial and temporal constraints, counseling applications provide personalized and continuous support, and digital media broaden access to education and social connection. When implemented with careful attention to service quality, ethical standards, and digital literacy, technology-based counseling can evolve into a hybrid counseling model well aligned with clients' needs in the digital era.

2. Ethical and Privacy Challenges

Ethical and privacy challenges related to client confidentiality are new challenges that need to be anticipated behind the convenience and flexibility offered by online counselling services. Online counselling services allow counselees to share highly personal and sensitive information, so maintaining counselees' confidentiality must be a counsellor's top priority. To prevent unauthorized access and data breaches in digital counseling services, maintaining confidentiality is a primary priority. This involves using secure technology and communicating over encrypted channels (Anindya et al., 2024). Every counsellor must adhere to the principle of confidentiality as a professional and ethical obligation, as the Counselling Code of Ethics and the Personal Data Protection Act provide them with a legal and moral basis for not disclosing their clients' personal information to others without their permission (Utami et al., 2023). In practice, protecting client privacy and upholding confidentiality are essential ethical considerations, but in the digital age, privacy protection becomes more complicated (Utami et al., 2023). In line with Zahidan et al. (2023), the

principle of confidentiality is very important for the counselling profession, as ethics emphasise counsees' privacy, which greatly affects their comfort and safety during counselling services.

Counsellors who use technology or social media for remote services are professionally obligated to inform clients about the limitations of confidentiality in digital environments (Sari & Marjo, 2022). Regarding specific ethical considerations, Sutijono and Farid (as cited in Saba, 2024) state that when a counsellor offers online counselling services, they need to consider several aspects, including: (1) acknowledging the potential and information of the client; (2) considering the possibility of showing concern; (3) obtaining the client's consent during counselling; (4) acknowledging the client's identity; (5) being aware of the risks associated with the confidentiality of online communication; and (6) maintaining the privacy of communication and data storage. In addition to upholding the confidentiality of client information in compliance with standards, counselors must be proficient with technology and inform clients of the limitations of online counseling services (Sabtana et al., 2025). Furthermore, implementing such services carries operational risks; Nugraheni (2021) highlights the possibility of misunderstandings between the counsellor and the client due to the absence of non-verbal cues. Therefore, the counsellor needs to explain this specifically in the informed consent form to ensure the client understands these limitations.

Counselors have an ethical need to explain the nature and boundaries of confidentiality in online counseling practices, especially group settings, as they offer digital-based services (Syamila & Marjo, 2022). Confidentiality is a critical issue when providing digital-based counselling services, and this requires special attention. Information breaches in digital counseling services may result in privacy violations, psychological injury to clients, and a decline in trust in counseling services (Himmatun 'Aliah et al., 2024). Counselors must exercise greater caution when selecting a secure platform that complies with privacy regulations when using online counseling applications or telecounseling. It's also important to consider the possibility of data leaks due to hacking, unauthorized third-party access, or careless electronic file storage (Utami et al., 2023). As a result, counselors must stay up to date on changes in laws governing the protection of personal information and regularly update their expertise in digital information security. To protect client privacy when interacting through online media, various approaches must be implemented. Several strategies to address confidentiality issues and improve the online counselling system in the future are as follows (Nugraheni, 2021):

- a. Counsellors must be able to determine the type of online counselling medium that best suits the client's comfort level and issues.
- b. Identify potential misunderstandings between the counsellor and the client.
- c. Maintain professional boundaries.
- d. Maintain confidentiality when using electronic tools.
- e. Anticipate delays in the counselling process.
- f. Building relationships through supervised training in online counselling practices.

3. Digital Competence for Counsellors

The optimal use of technology in guidance and counseling services is highly dependent on guidance counselors' willingness, knowledge, and competence in its use in the service process (Triyono & Febriani, 2018). Competence is a holistic combination of knowledge and skills formed through intensive interaction with the environment and the world of work. In addition, competence is also the ability to master, apply, and transform that knowledge into values and solutions in every job undertaken (Hartanto, 2018). Competence is a standard of ability that describes a person's qualifications as a whole, not only quantitatively but also qualitatively (Hazrullah & Furan, 2018). In the context of guidance and counseling, competency is not only about theory but also a significant determinant of the success of guidance programs that touch students' lives (Rahmawati, 2017). Digital competency is a key indicator of professional competency in this era. Digital competency is not merely about using gadgets, but rather a necessity for counselors to develop, select, and utilize various tools, media, and learning resources relevant to students' reality (Suryahadikusumah & Kurniasari, 2019). In technology-based counseling practices, such as telecounseling and online counseling, digital competence not only serves as a technical skill but also shapes the quality of the counseling relationship, the accuracy of the assessment, and the success of the intervention. Tetyana Blyznyuk (2018) details the digital competence of educators into five specific aspects, namely:

a. Information competency

Information competency is the counselor's ability to critically select, evaluate, and manage digital information appropriately for guidance and counseling services. Counselors are required to sort out valid, relevant, and accurate information before processing it into service media, so that students not only obtain a large amount of information but also receive information that is correct and useful. In practice, guidance counselors can identify and apply current issues relevant to students' needs, then deliver them through digital guidance and counseling media, such as PowerPoint presentations, leaflets, booklets, motivational videos, and other digital media. The use of these media not only enriches the variety of services but can also increase students' motivation to participate in guidance and counseling activities (Mawar, 2012).

The characteristics of counselors who have mastered information competencies include their ability to present innovations and to use increasingly varied service methods through information technology (Triyono & Febriani, 2018). This competency also plays an important role in filtering the rapid flow of digital information, protecting students from hoaxes and misleading information. Thus, the application of information competency can transform conventional, monotonous, and uninspiring guidance and counseling services into more interactive, relevant, and in line with developments in information technology.

b. Communication

This competency refers to the ability to interact and collaborate using digital platforms. Teachers not only convey information unilaterally but must also communicate with students, parents, and fellow teachers through digital media (e.g., Google Classroom, Zoom, or

WhatsApp Group). Technological media, such as online platforms, messaging applications, and video conferencing services, serve as the primary means by which counselors establish effective interaction and communication with clients in the delivery of technology-based counseling services (Soleha et al., 2023). In practice, telecounseling is crucial because counselors must convey empathy and psychological presence even without face-to-face interaction. Therefore, communication competence enables an intensive, open, and flexible relationship between counselors and students or parents, without being limited by space and time.

c. Educational Content Creation

Guidance counselors are required to develop their skills in implementing technology-based guidance and counseling programs. Guidance and counseling services can be provided in various forms, such as delivering information services online, forming guidance and counseling groups with students via digital platforms like WhatsApp or Telegram, and implementing cybercounseling (Attika & Sukardi, 2021). In this context, counselors also need to hone their creativity by developing innovative and engaging digital service content, such as animated media, podcasts, infographics, and interactive quizzes. The ability to create such digital content is important given the characteristics of Generation Z, who are very familiar with digital technology, thereby enabling the use of various digital platforms to increase student engagement in guidance and counseling services (Ristianti et al., 2022). Thus, educational content-creation competence enables counselors to innovate in delivering guidance and counseling services that align with students' learning styles and needs in the digital era.

d. Security

Security competencies emphasize counselors' ability to protect students from various risks in the digital world, such as cyberbullying, data theft, and exposure to harmful content. In technology-based counseling practices, counselors need to understand the process of exchanging client data and information through document sharing and online forms in order to obtain comprehensive general data and information related to client issues (Ardi et al., 2013). However, given that counseling data is highly confidential, counselors are required to implement robust security measures to prevent data leaks and hacking. Therefore, counselors must have a strong understanding of digital ethics, maintain client data privacy and confidentiality, and utilize security technologies such as passwords, firewalls, and other digital security systems. In addition to protecting data, counselors also play a role in guiding students to use the internet wisely, safely, and responsibly. Without adequate security competencies, technology-based counseling practices may violate the principle of confidentiality, a fundamental ethical principle in counseling, thereby eroding students' trust in guidance and counseling services.

e. Educational Problem Solving

Technology-based guidance and counseling services, especially those that use the internet and telecommunications networks, need to be designed with several considerations to achieve their objectives effectively. One important aspect is collecting sufficient data so

counselors gain a comprehensive understanding and can minimize misunderstandings with clients, especially when implementing online counseling via text, audio, and video-based applications (Gozali, 2020). However, in practice, implementing technology-based counseling services is not free of technical problems, such as network issues, application errors, or device issues. Educational problem-solving requires counselors to be creative in dealing with technical obstacles with practical solutions so that the guidance process is not interrupted. Therefore, counselors must be creative in finding solutions, for example, by exploring alternative platforms, using hybrid methods, or adjusting technology to continue supporting learning objectives.

Digital competence is not merely a supplement but a primary requirement in educational and counseling practices. The five aspects of competence above are interrelated and form the overall capabilities of a counselor or educator. Thus, counselors can identify problems affecting students, generate solutions, and collaborate with students until the problems are fully resolved. Therefore, improving counselor competence is an important factor in ensuring that technology-based counseling services can be implemented effectively and efficiently.

4. The Impact of the Digital Era on Mental Health

The development of the digital era has brought many benefits; however, it also presents significant challenges to mental health, particularly among adolescents. One of the most prevalent impacts is social media addiction. Excessive use of social media has been associated with increased levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. Adolescents who spend disproportionate time in virtual environments tend to experience a decline in the quality of face-to-face social interactions, which, in turn, affects their emotional regulation and psychological well-being (Ernawati, 2024). Other studies further confirm that greater social media use is positively associated with an increased risk of psychological problems among adolescents (Guslinda et al., 2024).

In addition to addiction, the digital era has also contributed to the emergence of digital isolation. Adolescents who predominantly interact through digital screens often experience weakened real-life social bonds, leading to feelings of loneliness, reduced social skills, and heightened vulnerability to depressive symptoms. Another serious concern is cyberbullying, which poses a greater psychological risk than traditional bullying due to its anonymity, broad reach, and difficulty of monitoring. Victims of cyberbullying frequently experience low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and, in severe cases, suicidal ideation (Ningrum & Amna, 2020). Empirical evidence also indicates that cyberbullying is strongly associated with internalizing problems such as anxiety and depression, as well as externalizing behaviors among adolescents, highlighting its serious psychological consequences (Kowalski et al., 2014).

To address these challenges, counselors are required not only to understand the negative impacts of digital technology but also to implement evidence-based preventive and intervention strategies. Digital security competence, as discussed in the previous section, serves as a foundational professional skill that enables counselors to design and deliver effective psychoeducational and counseling interventions in digital contexts. Systematic

reviews of cyberbullying intervention programs indicate that structured psychoeducation, counseling-based prevention programs, and school-wide digital literacy initiatives are effective in reducing cyberbullying behaviors and mitigating their psychological impacts on adolescents (Hutson et al., 2018).

In addition to evidence from international studies, locally based interventions in Indonesia have also demonstrated the practical application of technology-supported psychoeducational approaches to address cyberbullying among adolescents. The “Say No to Cyberbullying” program, implemented through structured psychoeducation, has been shown to reduce adolescents’ involvement in cyberbullying behaviors by increasing awareness, emotional regulation, and responsible digital conduct (Gazadinda et al., 2024). Similarly, the CARE (Caring, Respect, and Educate) program emphasizes empathy, mutual respect, and positive digital interaction as preventive strategies in educational settings, contributing to healthier online behavior among students (Islam, 2020).

Such interventions emphasize awareness-building, safe online behavior, emotional regulation, and peer support, which closely align with counselors’ professional roles in educational settings. By integrating digital security competence with preventive counseling, counselors can proactively reduce the risks of cyberbullying while fostering safer digital environments for adolescents.

Thus, the impact of the digital era on mental health cannot be underestimated. Issues such as social media addiction, digital isolation, and cyberbullying require serious attention from families, schools, and society. A balanced and evidence-based approach is therefore essential, one that optimizes the benefits of digital technology while minimizing its risks through counselor-led psychoeducation, digital literacy enhancement, and ethically grounded counseling practices, so that adolescents’ mental health can be protected in the digital age.

CONCLUSION

This conceptual literature review concludes that integrating digital technology into guidance and counselling practices has expanded the accessibility, flexibility, and continuity of mental health services in school and community contexts through telecounselling, digital platforms, and technology-assisted interventions. However, the findings consistently indicate that the effectiveness of these innovations remains strongly dependent on the quality of the therapeutic alliance between counsellor and client. The literature emphasises that digital technology should function as a complementary medium rather than a replacement for face-to-face counselling, as empathy, trust, and professional presence remain central mechanisms of change.

This review also identifies ethical challenges related to data privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and the digital divide, particularly in educational settings involving children and adolescents. Accordingly, counsellors are encouraged to develop digital competencies, integrate technology strategically to enhance service reach and engagement, and adhere to clear ethical and institutional guidelines to ensure that counselling practices remain effective, inclusive, and responsive in the digital era.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank Dr. Ipah Saripah, as the course lecturer, for her guidance and academic support during the writing of this article. The author would also like to thank all team members, namely Agisni Nur Fauziah, Gitsa Ambar Aqila, Neng Dahlia, and Shalma Saadatun Hamidah, who contributed valuable insights of this article through discussions, feedback, and support during the writing process. The cooperation and contributions of all team members were instrumental in the completion of this article. The author also expresses appreciation for the support and motivation provided, which enabled this article to be completed successfully.

REFERENCES

- Ajie, F., & Januba, N. (2024). The impact of social media addiction on adolescent mental health: A systematic literature review. *AGCAF: Annual Guidance and Counseling Academic Forum*, 103–109.
- American Psychological Association. (2024). *APA guidelines for the practice of telepsychology* (Revision, approved by APA Council of Representatives, August 2024). <https://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/telepsychology-revision.pdf>
- Andersson, E., Holmes, E. A., & Kavanagh, D. (2018). Innovations in digital interventions for psychological trauma: Harnessing advances in cognitive science. *Mhealth*, 4, 47.
- Anindya, J., Budiman, N., & Nadhiroh, N. A. (2024). Etika profesi bimbingan dan konseling: Menghadapi tantangan kerahasiaan dalam layanan konseling online. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Counseling*, 8(1), 25–35.
- Anissa, M., Lovprima, N., Septiani, V., Abdullah, D., & Hasni, D. (2024). The influence of social media on adolescent mental health: A literature review. *Jurnal PPMI*, 1(1), 58–65. <https://doi.org/10.70248/jp.v1i1.1197>
- Ardi, Z., Yendi, F. M., & Ifdil, I. (2013). Konseling online: Sebuah pendekatan teknologi dalam pelayanan konseling. *Jurnal Konseling dan Pendidikan*, 1(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.29210/1100>
- Attika, S., & Sukardi, T. (2021). Penerapan media teknologi dalam pemberian layanan bimbingan dan konseling di masa pandemi. *Jurnal Al-Taujih*, 7(1), 23–28. <https://doi.org/10.15548/atj.v7i1.2669>
- Barak, A., Hen, L., Boniel-Nissim, M., & Shapira, N. A. (2008). A comprehensive review and a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of internet-based psychotherapeutic interventions. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 26(2–4), 109–160.
- Barnett, J. E., & Kolmes, K. (2016). The practice of tele-mental health: Ethical, legal, and clinical issues for practitioners. *Practice Innovations*, 1(1), 53–66. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pri0000014>
- Blyznyuk, T. (2018). Formation of teachers digital competence: Domestic challenges and foreign experience. *Journal of Vasyi Stefanyk Precarpathian National University*, 5(1), 42. <https://doi.org/10.15330/jpnu.5.1.40-46>
- Elpas, Z. (2020). Penggunaan media teknologi informasi dalam layanan bimbingan dan konseling. *Lentera Negeri*, 1(2), 48–51. <https://doi.org/10.29210/99780>

- Ernawati, E. (2024). Dampak kecanduan media sosial terhadap kesehatan mental remaja: Studi cross sectional [The impact of social media addiction on the mental health of adolescents: A cross sectional study]. *Intan Husada: Jurnal Ilmiah Keperawatan, 12*(01), 78-92. <https://doi.org/10.52236/ih.v12i1.507>
- Fitzpatrick, K. K., Darcy, A., & Vierhile, M. (2017). Delivering cognitive behavior therapy to young adults with symptoms of depression and anxiety using a fully automated conversational agent (Woebot): A randomized controlled trial. *JMIR Mental Health, 4*(2), e7785.
- Gazadinda, R., Wulan, D. K., & Muzdalifah, F. (2024). Program "Say No to Cyberbullying": Psikoedukasi untuk mengurangi keterlibatan berperilaku cyberbullying di remaja Jabodetabek. *Panrita Abdi-Jurnal Pengabdian pada Masyarakat, 8*(1), 234-244. <http://journal.unhas.ac.id/index.php/panritaabdi>
- Gozali, A. (2020). Layanan bimbingan dan konseling berbasis teknologi informasi pada masa PSBB (pembatasan sosial berskala besar). *Coution: Journal Counseling and Education, 1*(2), 36-49. <https://doi.org/10.15548/atj.v7i1.2669>
- Guslinda, Suryani, U., & Okjevi, Y. (2024). Hubungan intensitas penggunaan media sosial terhadap kesehatan mental emosional remaja. *Jurnal Kesehatan Mercusuar, 7*(2), 96-102. <https://doi.org/10.36984/jkm.v7i2.515>
- Habibah. (2025). Penggunaan konseling online dalam menangani masalah psikososial pada remaja pasca pandemi. *BIKOLING: Jurnal Ilmu Bimbingan dan Konseling, 2*(2), 13-16.
- Hartanto, F. M. (2018). *Paradigma baru manajemen Indonesia: Menciptakan nilai dengan bertumpu pada kebijakan dan potensi insani*. Mizan Pustaka.
- Hazrullah, & Furan. (2018). Kompetensi profesional guru bimbingan konseling dalam pemecahan masalah belajar siswa di MAN Rukoh Banda Aceh. *Jurnal Ilmiah DIDAKTIKA, 53*(9), 1689-1699. <https://doi.org/10.15017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Himmatun'Aliah, V., Budiman, N., & Nadhirah, N. A. (2024). Masalah etika privasi digital: Kebocoran informasi konseli dalam setting konseling komunitas. *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling dan Psikologi, 4*(1), 39-47.
- Horwitz, A. G., Mills, E. D., Sen, S., & Bohnert, A. S. (2024). Comparative effectiveness of three digital interventions for adults seeking psychiatric services: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA Network Open, 7*(7).
- Hutson, E. N., Kelly, S. A., & Militello, L. K. (2018). Systematic review of cyberbullying interventions for youth and parents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 31*(2-3), 95-110.
- Islam, P. R. D. P. H. (2020). Pengembangan program CARE (Caring, Respect and Educate) sebagai upaya pencegahan perilaku. *Usrah, 1*(1), 28-37.
- Kowalski, R. M., Giumetti, G. W., Schroeder, A. N., & Lattanner, M. R. (2014). Bullying in the digital age: A critical review and meta-analysis of cyberbullying research among youth. *Psychological Bulletin, 140*(4), 1073.
- Löchner, J., Carlbring, P., Schuller, B., Torous, J., & Sander, L. B. (2025). Digital interventions in mental health: An overview and future perspectives. *Internet Interventions, 40*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.invent.2025.100824>

- Mansyur, A. I., Badrujaman, A., Imawati, R., & Fadhillah, D. N. (2019). Konseling online sebagai upaya menangani masalah perundungan di kalangan anak muda. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu Sosial, 29*(2), 140-148.
- Marraccini, M. E., et al. (2023). School-based mental health supports during COVID-19: School professional perspectives. *Psychology in the Schools, 60*(7), 2460-2482. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22869>
- (Catatan: APA 7th mewajibkan menuliskan hingga 20 nama penulis sebelum menggunakan et al. Jika penulis asli lebih dari 20, format ini benar. Jika kurang, harap tuliskan semua nama).
- Mawar, R. (2012). *Efektivitas penggunaan media pembelajaran e-learning berbasis web pada pelajaran teknologi informasi dan komunikasi terhadap hasil belajar siswa kelas X SMA Negeri 1 Kalasan* [Skripsi, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta].
- Nagel, D. M., & Anthony, K. (2011). Text-based online counseling: Chat. In *Online counseling*. Academic Press.
- Naslund, J. A., Aschbrenner, K. A., Marsch, L. A., & Bartels, S. J. (2016). The future of mental health care: Peer-to-peer support and social media. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences, 25*(2), 113-122.
- Ningrum, F. S., & Amna, Z. (2020). Cyberbullying victimization dan kesehatan mental pada remaja. *INSAN Jurnal Psikologi dan Kesehatan Mental, 5*(1), 35. <https://doi.org/10.20473/jpkm.v5i12020.35-48>
- Nugraheni, E. P. (2021). Analisis isu etis dalam konseling online dan rekomendasi untuk perbaikan praktik di masa depan. *Indonesian Journal of Guidance and Counseling: Theory and Application, 10*(2), 24-34.
- Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2008). *Systematic reviews in the social sciences: A practical guide*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Ramadhan, C. S., & Irfanudin, F. (2021). The development of research on telecounseling in Indonesia: A literature review. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Sustainable Innovation Track Humanities Education and Social Sciences* (pp. 299-303). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211227.048>
- Rakhmawati, D. (2017). Konselor sekolah abad 21: Tantangan dan peluang. *Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling, 3*(1), 1-10.
- Richards, D., & Viganó, N. (2013). Online counseling: A narrative and critical review of the literature. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 69*(9), 994-1011. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21974>
- Risianti, D. H. (2022). Kompetensi digital guru bimbingan dan konseling di abad 21. *Buletin Konseling dan Psikoterapi, 4*(2), 503-508. <https://doi.org/10.51214/bocp.v4i3.372>
- Saba, S. S. (2024). Membangun profesionalisme dalam era teknologi: Transformasi layanan bimbingan konseling online. *JBK Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling, 2*(1), 17-24.
- Sabtana, F. I., Aminah, S., Jayus, R., & Mahyudin, M. J. (2025). Etika profesi konselor dalam praktik konseling online di Indonesia: Tinjauan scoping review. *ROSYADA: Islamic Guidance and Counseling, 6*(1).

- Sari, M. P., & Marjo, H. K. (2022). Studi literatur kode etik konseling online. *Jurnal Paedagogy, 9*(1), 168-178.
- Soleha, S. N., Hartini, H., & Rizal, S. (2023). Peran media dan teknologi dalam layanan bimbingan dan konseling di SMA Negeri 1 Rejang Lebong. *At-Taujih: Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam, 6*(2), 17-29. <https://doi.org/10.22373/taujih.v6i2.21687>
- Su, S., Frounfelker, R. L., Desrosiers, A., Brennan, R. T., Farrar, J., & Betancourt, T. S. (2021). Classifying childhood war trauma exposure: Latent profile analyses of Sierra Leone's former child soldiers. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 62*(6), 751-761. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13312>
- Suryahadikusumah, A. R., & Kurniasari, K. (2019). Karakteristik guru BK millennial di sekolah menengah atas Kota Palembang. *TERAPUTIK: Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling, 3*(2), 52-57. <https://doi.org/10.26539/teraputik.32125>
- Syamila, D., & Marjo, H. K. (2022). Etika profesi bimbingan dan konseling: Konseling kelompok online dan asas kerahasiaan. *Jurnal Paedagogy, 9*(1), 116-123.
- Torous, J., et al. (2025). The evolving field of digital mental health: Current evidence and implementation issues for smartphone apps, generative artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. *World Psychiatry, 24*(2), 156-174. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.21299>
- (Catatan: Sama seperti Marraccini, tuliskan nama semua penulis jika kurang dari 21).
- Triyono, T., & Febriani, R. D. (2018). Pentingnya pemanfaatan teknologi informasi oleh guru bimbingan dan konseling. *Jurnal Wahana Konseling, 1*(2), 74-83. <https://doi.org/10.47453/coution.v1i2.117>
- Utami, C. A., Agustina, S., Nasution, T. M. S., & Humairoh, S. M. (2023). Sosialisasi etika konseling: Menjaga kerahasiaan dan privasi klien di era digital. *PENDALAS: Jurnal Penelitian Tindakan Kelas dan Pengabdian Masyarakat, 3*(3), 262-287.
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013-2030*.
- Zahidah, S., Budiman, N., & Nadhirah, N. A. (2023). Asas kerahasiaan dalam pelaksanaan konseling kelompok online. *Al-Kamilah: Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Pendidikan Islam, 2*(1), 11-20.