



## **The Role of Individual Counseling Services in Transforming Social Relationships of Isolated Students: A Qualitative Study in School Environments**

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### **Abstract**

Hubungan sosial yang sehat merupakan salah satu indikator keberhasilan perkembangan peserta didik di lingkungan sekolah. Namun, sebagian siswa mengalami keterasingan sosial yang ditandai dengan rendahnya interaksi dengan teman sebaya, kurangnya partisipasi dalam aktivitas kelompok, dan minimnya penerimaan sosial dari lingkungan sekitar. Kondisi tersebut berpotensi menghambat perkembangan pribadi, sosial, dan akademik siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kondisi hubungan sosial siswa berdasarkan hasil sosiometri, mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan keterasingan sosial, serta menganalisis peran layanan konseling individu dalam mendukung transformasi hubungan sosial siswa. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penelitian deskriptif. Data diperoleh melalui penyebaran sosiometri kepada 24 siswa dalam satu kelas, observasi, dan wawancara terhadap satu orang guru Bimbingan dan Konseling. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan, sedangkan keabsahan data diperkuat dengan teknik triangulasi sumber dan triangulasi teknik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa memiliki hubungan sosial yang baik, namun masih terdapat beberapa siswa dengan tingkat penerimaan sosial rendah yang berpotensi mengalami keterasingan sosial. Keterasingan sosial dipengaruhi oleh dinamika kelompok pertemanan, keterbatasan kemampuan berinteraksi, dan penyesuaian diri siswa di lingkungan sekolah. Layanan konseling individu berperan dalam membantu siswa melalui pendekatan personal, pemberian perhatian, dan pendampingan secara berkelanjutan sehingga mendukung perkembangan hubungan sosial siswa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa data sosiometri dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai dasar identifikasi kebutuhan siswa, sehingga layanan konseling individu dapat diberikan secara lebih tepat sasaran untuk mendukung perkembangan sosial peserta didik.

Kata Kunci: Konseling Individu, Siswa Terisolir, Hubungan Sosial, Transformasi Sosial, Studi Kualitatif

### **Abstract**

Healthy social relationships are one indicator of successful student development in the school environment. However, some students experience social isolation characterized by low interaction with peers, lack of participation in group activities, and minimal social acceptance from the surrounding environment. These conditions have the potential to hinder students' personal, social, and academic development. This study aims to describe the condition of students' social relationships based on sociometry results, identify factors that cause social isolation, and analyze the role of individual counseling services in supporting the transformation of students' social relationships. The study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. Data were obtained through the distribution of sociometry to 24 students in one class, observation, and interviews with one Guidance and Counseling teacher. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and

conclusion drawing, while data validity was strengthened by source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques. The results showed that most students have good social relationships, but there are still some students with low levels of social acceptance who have the potential to experience social isolation. Social isolation is influenced by the dynamics of friendship groups, limited ability to interact, and students' adjustment in the school environment. Individual counseling services play a role in assisting students through a personalized approach, providing ongoing attention and support, thereby supporting the development of students' social relationships. This study concluded that sociometric data can be used as a basis for identifying student needs, allowing for more targeted individual counseling services to support students' social development.

**Keywords:** *Individual Counseling, Isolated Students, Social Relationships, Social Transformation, Qualitative Study*

### **Research Background**

Schools are social environments that play a strategic role in supporting student development. In addition to serving as venues for learning, schools serve as interactive spaces that enable students to develop social, emotional, and interpersonal skills. Through interactions with peers, students learn to develop cooperation, communication, empathy, and social skills necessary for everyday life. The school environment provides opportunities for students to interact with a variety of individuals with diverse backgrounds, characters, and abilities. Through these interactions, students not only gain academic knowledge but also learn to appreciate differences, cooperate, resolve conflicts constructively, and build healthy interpersonal relationships.

These abilities are an important part of social development that will influence students' success in adapting both in the school environment and in the community. Social relationships formed at school significantly contribute to students' psychological development. Positive interactions with peers can boost self-confidence, foster empathy, strengthen communication skills, and foster collaborative skills in various learning activities. Conversely, less harmonious social relationships can hinder students' social and emotional development, potentially leading to various adjustment problems.

Therefore, schools need to create an environment that supports healthy social relationships so that every student has an

equal opportunity to develop optimally. This view aligns with various studies that suggest a conducive school environment and positive social interactions are crucial factors in the development of social skills, emotional development, and student success in the learning process (Indriyani et al., 2021; Putra et al., 2021; Yumanda et al., 2024; Hidayah & Salimi, 2024).

Positive social relationships not only play a role in supporting students' personal and academic development but are also an indicator of successful adjustment to the school environment. Students who are able to establish healthy social relationships tend to have greater self-confidence, are able to work collaboratively in groups, have effective communication skills, and are more adaptable to diverse learning environments (Indriyani et al., 2021; Hidayah & Salimi, 2024). Conversely, not all students are able to build good social relationships with their peers. Some students experience difficulties interacting, are less accepted in friendship groups, and even lack the choice of their peers, resulting in isolation. This condition can result in low self-confidence, decreased participation in learning activities, feelings of alienation, and even hamper students' social and emotional development (Sapitri et al., 2022). Therefore, students experiencing social isolation require special attention from schools, especially guidance and counseling teachers, so that these problems can be identified and addressed early.

From a guidance and counseling perspective, identifying isolated students is a crucial first step in developing services

tailored to their needs. One widely used instrument is sociometry, a non-test technique used to map social relationship patterns among students, determine their level of acceptance within a group, and identify students in need of guidance and counseling services (Chayati & Rosidah, 2022). Sociometric results can also provide a more objective picture of classroom social dynamics, making it easier for guidance and counseling teachers to determine appropriate interventions, whether through classroom services, group guidance, or individual counseling. Various studies have shown that the use of sociometry remains a relevant and valid instrument for identifying students' social relationships and supporting data-driven decision-making in guidance and counseling services (Susanto & Novitasari, 2024).

In an effort to help students overcome various personal and social problems, guidance and counseling teachers play a crucial role by providing various types of services tailored to students' needs. One such strategic service is individual counseling, a face-to-face service provided between a counselor and client to help students understand the problems they face, find alternative solutions, and develop their ability to make independent decisions (Hutagalung et al., 2021). Through this service, guidance and counseling teachers not only act as solution providers but also as facilitators, helping students recognize their potential, develop interpersonal skills, and improve social adjustment in the school environment. Various studies have shown that individual counseling services contribute to students' social development by providing a space for students to express their feelings, build self-confidence, and improve relationships with their surroundings (Effendi et al., 2025).

Implementing individual counseling services also requires guidance counselors to build warm, empathetic, and accepting relationships so that students feel safe in expressing their various problems. A good counseling relationship will make it easier for guidance counselors to understand the root of

students' problems and determine the appropriate form of assistance. Furthermore, a proactive approach, such as approaching students first (*jemput bola*), can increase the openness of students who tend to be passive or have difficulty expressing their problems. This approach aligns with the results of interviews conducted with guidance counselors at MA NW Kotaraja, which explained that handling students with social problems is done through an *jemput bola* approach, providing individual counseling services, and ongoing support so that students are more open and able to adjust to the school environment.

Various previous studies have discussed the effectiveness of individual counseling services in helping students overcome various personal, social, and academic problems. Research results indicate that individual counseling services can improve students' adjustment skills, self-confidence, communication skills, and help them develop better interpersonal relationships (Hutagalung et al., 2021; Jawahir, 2021). Furthermore, research on the use of sociometric techniques has also shown that these instruments are effective in identifying students' social relationship patterns, including identifying popular, less accepted, and socially isolated students, thus providing a basis for developing more targeted guidance and counseling services (Chayati & Rosidah, 2022; Susanto & Novitasari, 2024).

However, most of these studies still focus on the effectiveness of individual counseling services or the use of sociometry in isolation. Research that integrates the results of identifying social relationships through sociometry techniques with observations and interviews with guidance and counseling teachers to describe the role of individual counseling services in dealing with isolated students is still relatively limited, especially at the Islamic high school level. Based on the results of the sociometry distribution conducted at MA NW Kotaraja, it was found that there are variations in social relationships between students, ranging from students with high acceptance levels to

students who are categorized as less selected or isolated. These findings were reinforced by the results of interviews with guidance and counseling teachers who revealed that in the school environment there are still students who experience difficulties interacting, forming friendship groups (circles), and require a special approach through individual counseling services and outreach strategies to be able to adjust to their social environment.

Based on the problem description, this study was conducted to describe the condition of students' social relationships based on the results of sociometric distribution and to analyze the role of individual counseling services in helping students experiencing social isolation in the school environment. This study used a qualitative approach by utilizing data from sociometric results, observations, and interviews with guidance and counseling teachers to obtain a comprehensive picture of the dynamics of students' social relationships and the efforts made by guidance and counseling teachers to address them. This approach is in line with the principles of implementing comprehensive guidance and counseling services, which emphasize the importance of using data as a basis for identifying student needs, designing appropriate services, and evaluating the effectiveness of guidance and counseling programs on an ongoing basis (American School Counselor Association, 2019; Gysbers & Henderson, 2021).

The results of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the study of students' social relationships, the use of sociometric techniques, and the implementation of individual counseling services in the context of guidance and counseling in schools. Practically, the results of this study are expected to be a consideration for guidance and counseling teachers in developing more targeted service programs, based on student needs, and supported by empirical data so that efforts to help students experiencing

social isolation can be carried out more effectively and sustainably. In addition, this study is expected to serve as a reference for future researchers who wish to develop studies on students' social relationships and the implementation of data-based guidance and counseling services in the school environment.

## **B. Method of Practice**

### **1. Research Approach and Design**

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. This approach was chosen because the study aims to describe the conditions of students' social relationships and analyze the role of individual counseling services in helping students experiencing social isolation in the school environment. Qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon in depth based on participants' experiences in a natural context, resulting in a comprehensive description of the research object (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **2. Research Location and Participants**

The research was conducted at MA NW Kotaraja, with the subjects consisting of Guidance and Counseling teachers as the primary informants and 24 11th-grade students as respondents in the sociometric distribution. Informants were determined using a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting informants who were considered to have the best understanding of the conditions of students' social relationships and the implementation of guidance and counseling services at the school (Sugiyono, 2023).

### **3. Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection techniques in this study included observation, interviews, and sociometry. Observations were conducted to obtain an overview of students' social relationships and the implementation of guidance and counseling services at school. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with guidance and counseling teachers to obtain information on the characteristics of students experiencing social isolation, the

types of services provided, and the individual counseling process.

Meanwhile, sociometric techniques were used as supporting data to identify patterns of social relationships between students, determine levels of acceptance within groups, and identify students who fall into the isolated category. The sociometric results were then further expanded through observations and interviews to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019).

#### 4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data in this study were analyzed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction stage, researchers selected, grouped, and simplified data from observations, interviews, and sociometric distributions according to the research focus. The data presentation stage was carried out by systematically organizing the research results in the form of narrative descriptions and tables to facilitate researchers in understanding the relationships between the data. Next, the conclusion drawing and verification stage was carried out by interpreting the data that had been obtained and re-examining the consistency of the findings by comparing data from various sources to obtain conclusions that align with the research objectives (Miles et al., 2020).

The validity of the data in this study was carried out using technical triangulation. Technical triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained through observations, interviews, and sociometric distribution results so that each data can complement and strengthen each other. Furthermore, the researchers double-checked the interview and observation results to ensure the information obtained remained consistent with the conditions in the field. Through this process, it is hoped that the data obtained will have a high level of credibility and be able to provide an accurate picture of students' social relationships and the role of

individual counseling services in helping students experiencing social isolation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Research result

This study involved one Guidance and Counseling teacher as the main informant who was selected purposively because of his knowledge and experience regarding the condition of students' social relationships and the implementation of individual counseling services at MA NW Kotaraja. In addition, this study also involved 24 grade XI students of MA NW Kotaraja as respondents in the distribution of sociometry. The number of respondents was adjusted to the number of students present during the distribution of sociometry, while two other students could not participate in the activity because they were absent from school. Sociometric data were used to identify patterns of social relationships between students and identify students who experienced social isolation. Furthermore, data from observations and interviews were used to deepen understanding regarding the implementation of individual counseling services in helping students who experienced social isolation.

| N o. | Participa<br>nts                              | co<br>de | Amo<br>unt      | Role in<br>research                                                                                                                                                        |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.   | Guidanc<br>e and<br>Counseli<br>ng<br>Teacher | P1       | 1<br>perso<br>n | The main informant provided information regarding the condition of students' social relationships, factors causing social alienation, and the implementation of individual |

|    |                                     |        |           |                                                                                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------|--------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                     |        |           | counseling services.                                                                                        |
| 2. | Students of class XI MA NW Kotaraja | S1-S24 | 24 people | Respondents were distributed sociometrically to identify patterns of social relationships between students. |

Table 1. Profile of research participants

| Theme                                       | Subtheme                                                   | Data source                               |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Condition of students' social relationships | Social relationship patterns based on sociometric results. | Sociometry                                |
|                                             | Students who have low acceptance levels (isolated)         | Sociometry                                |
| Factors causing social alienation           | Lack of self-confidence                                    | BK teacher interview                      |
|                                             | Quiet personality                                          | BK teacher interview                      |
|                                             | Formation of friendship groups ( <i>circles</i> )          | Interviews and observations               |
| Implementation of individual counseling     | Identify students who need services                        | Guidance and Counseling Teacher Interview |
|                                             | <i>Outreach</i> approach                                   | BK teacher                                |

|                                                  |                                                          |                            |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                                  |                                                          | interview                  |
|                                                  | Stages of implementing individual counseling             | BK teacher interview       |
| Transformation of students' social relationships | Increased self-confidence                                | BK teacher interview       |
|                                                  | Improved interpersonal communication                     | Observation and interviews |
|                                                  | Increased involvement in group activities                | Observation                |
|                                                  | Changes in social relationships after receiving services | Observation and interviews |

Table 2. Matrix of themes and subthemes from qualitative analysis results

Based on the results of the data analysis, four main themes were obtained that describe the focus of the research, namely (1) the condition of students' social relationships, (2) factors causing social alienation, (3) the implementation of individual counseling services, and (4) the transformation of students' social relationships after receiving individual counseling services. These themes were obtained through a data reduction process, grouping information based on similarity of meaning, and verification of the results of observations, interviews, and sociometric distribution. Furthermore, each theme was analyzed in depth to describe the phenomena occurring at MA NW Kotaraja.

### **1. Condition of students' social relationships based on sociometric results**

Sociometric data were distributed to 24 11th-grade social studies students at MA NW Kotaraja who were present during the

study. The sociometric technique was used as supporting data to identify patterns of social relationships between students and to determine the level of social acceptance of each student within the class. The results of this identification served as a basis for researchers to understand the condition of students' social relationships before analyzing the role of individual counseling services in helping students experiencing social isolation.

The results of the sociometric analysis indicate that social relationships among students in grade XI IPS have diverse characteristics. Some students receive a high level of social acceptance, indicated by the many choices provided by their classmates. Furthermore, the existence of friendship groups (cliques) was also found, demonstrating close social relationships among their members. On the other hand, there are still several students who receive little or no choice from their classmates, indicating a tendency towards social alienation within the learning group.

| Findings                                             | Results     |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Number of respondents                                | 24 students |
| Students with the highest level of social acceptance | 1 student   |
| Students with high levels of social acceptance       | 2 students  |
| Friendship group (circle)                            | 2 groups    |
| Students are less selected                           | 5 students  |
| Isolated students                                    | 10 students |

*Table 3. Summary of sociometric distribution results. Source: Results of sociometric data processing by researchers, 2026*

Based on Table 3, findings indicate that one student had the highest level of social acceptance, two students with high levels of social acceptance, and two friendship groups (cliques) formed within the class. Furthermore, the sociometric results also identified five students who were less likely to be selected and ten students who were considered isolated in the context of selecting study partners. These findings indicate that social relationships among students are not yet evenly distributed,

resulting in some students still having low levels of social acceptance.

The presence of isolated students is a concern in this study because it can affect social interaction, cooperation in learning activities, and adjustment to the school environment. Therefore, the results of the sociometric distribution serve as a basis for further exploring the factors causing social isolation through interviews with Guidance and Counseling teachers and observations, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the issue.

## **2. Factors Causing Social Alienation in Students**

Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers indicate that students' social isolation is influenced by the interaction patterns that develop within the school environment. The guidance and counseling teacher explained that social groups (circles) have formed within the classroom, resulting in some students being less involved in interactions with their peers. Furthermore, the guidance and counseling teacher also revealed that some students still feel excluded from the school social environment. This finding aligns with the results of sociometric analysis, which showed some students with low levels of social acceptance.

Based on observations and interviews, these conditions are influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by the dynamics of social relationships that develop within the classroom. The existence of friendship groups that tend to be exclusive makes it difficult for some students to adapt and form relationships with their peers. This situation is one of the factors driving the need for guidance and counseling services to help students improve their social interaction skills.

## **3. Implementation of Individual Counseling Services**

Interview results indicate that guidance and counseling teachers play a crucial role in assisting students experiencing social problems through individual counseling services. The service begins with the identification of students in need of

assistance, based on teacher observations, homeroom teacher reports, and the student's social relationships as identified through sociometric testing. Once identified, the guidance and counseling teacher engages in a personal approach to build trust and create a comfortable environment, encouraging students to disclose their concerns.

During the counseling process, guidance counselors employ a student-centered approach. They provide opportunities for students to share their experiences, difficulties, and feelings without judgment. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of any information shared by students to ensure a healthy counseling relationship and a sense of security for students throughout the counseling process.

Based on observations, guidance counselors don't simply wait for students to come to the counseling room, but actively engage with students who exhibit signs of social withdrawal. This approach involves intensive communication, motivation, and gradual mentoring to help students become more confident in interacting with their peers. This proactive approach helps guidance counselors understand students' conditions more deeply, allowing them to tailor services to their individual needs. Research findings indicate that individual counseling services serve not only as a problem-solving tool but also as a means to help students develop interaction skills, increase self-confidence, and build more positive social relationships within the school environment. Thus, individual counseling services are an important intervention in helping students experiencing social isolation.

#### **4. Transforming Students' Social Relationships Through Individual Counseling Services**

Based on interviews and observations, guidance and counseling teachers strive to assist students experiencing social isolation through individual counseling services with a personalized approach. This approach involves providing

special attention to students experiencing difficulties interacting, building intensive communication, and fostering trust-based relationships between the guidance and counseling teachers and students. Furthermore, guidance and counseling teachers strive to help students build relationships with their peers through various forms of support tailored to each student's individual needs.

Observations show that guidance and counseling teachers not only serve as counselors but also as facilitators, encouraging students to be more active in the school's social environment. This includes providing motivation, engaging students experiencing social isolation, and introducing them to peers with similar characteristics or experiences. This approach aims to help students feel accepted in their social environment and provide greater opportunities for developing interpersonal relationships with classmates.

Based on research findings, individual counseling services serve as a form of support used by guidance and counseling teachers to facilitate students' social adjustment. Various efforts undertaken by guidance and counseling teachers demonstrate a coaching process aimed at helping students develop their interaction skills, increase their self-confidence, and build better social relationships within the school environment. Thus, individual counseling services are an important part of the transformation of students' social relationships, although this research focuses more on the service implementation process than on quantitatively measuring changes in student behavior.

### **Discussion**

#### **1. Theme 1: Conditions of students' social relationships**

The research findings indicate that the results of the sociometric distribution successfully identified variations in social relationships between students, ranging from students with high levels of social acceptance to students who are classified as isolated. The



presence of isolated students indicates that social interactions in the classroom are not yet evenly distributed, resulting in some students still experiencing difficulties in building relationships with their peers. In the context of guidance and counseling, this information is crucial because it helps guidance and counseling teachers identify students who need attention and services earlier. Thus, sociometry serves not only as a tool for mapping social relationships between students but also as a basis for developing guidance and counseling services that are appropriate to students' needs (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019).

These findings align with research by Chayati and Rosidah, who stated that the use of sociometry facilitates guidance and counseling teachers in identifying students experiencing difficulties in establishing social relationships, thus providing more targeted services. Similarly, research by Susanto and Novitasari explains that sociometry is an effective instrument for mapping the dynamics of social relationships in the classroom and supporting decision-making in guidance and counseling services. Therefore, the use of sociometry in this study not only provides information regarding the social position of each student but also provides a starting point for guidance and counseling teachers in designing interventions through individual counseling services to assist students experiencing social isolation.

These findings emphasize that social relationships are a crucial aspect of student development because they influence the process of self-adjustment, learning comfort, and student engagement in school activities. According to Prayitno (2017), sociometry is a technique in guidance and counseling used to obtain an overview of social relationship patterns among group members.

Information obtained through sociometry allows guidance and counseling teachers to identify students with low levels of social acceptance so that they can immediately receive services appropriate to their needs. In line with this opinion, Tohirin (2019) explains that mapping social

relationships through sociometry helps guidance and counseling teachers understand the dynamics of interactions between students, identify potential social problems, and develop more effective and targeted service programs. Therefore, the sociometry results in this study not only describe the condition of students' social relationships but also serve as a basis for determining interventions through individual counseling services for students experiencing social isolation.

The findings of this study align with those of Chayati and Rosidah (2022), who demonstrated that sociometry is an effective tool for identifying students' social relationships and assisting guidance and counseling teachers in determining appropriate services to meet their needs. The study explained that information obtained through sociometry facilitates guidance and counseling teachers in identifying students with low social acceptance, enabling more targeted interventions. The findings of this study also reinforce the findings of Susanto and Novitasari (2024), who stated that mapping social relationships through sociometry provides an overview of classroom interaction dynamics, including the presence of students who are less accepted or experience social isolation. Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrate that the use of sociometry serves not only as an identification tool but also as an important basis for developing individual counseling services for students in need.

Based on the research findings and supported by theory and previous research, it is understood that the distribution of sociometry is an important initial step in the process of providing guidance and counseling services in schools. Through sociometry, guidance and counseling teachers obtain information about each student's social position, thereby identifying students who require more attention in terms of social relationships. In this study, the finding of students experiencing social isolation provides the basis for guidance and counseling teachers to provide more targeted

individual counseling services according to the students' needs.

Thus, sociometry serves not only as a tool for mapping social relationships but also as a basis for decision-making in developing preventive and curative service programs. These findings suggest that integrating sociometry results with individual counseling services is a relevant strategy to help guidance counselors understand students' social problems and design more effective interventions to support their social development.

## **2. Theme 2: Factors causing social alienation of students**

The results of the study indicate that students' social isolation is not only influenced by individual characteristics, but also by the dynamics of social relationships that develop in the school environment. Based on the results of interviews, Guidance and Counseling teachers revealed that the formation of friendship groups (circles) causes some students to interact more frequently with certain groups, while other students have difficulty joining these social circles. This condition indicates that social isolation is the result of the interaction between personal factors and social environmental factors. This finding is also supported by the results of sociometry which identified several students with low levels of social acceptance, thus indicating that there is still inequality in the pattern of social relationships between students. Thus, social isolation in this study is understood as a phenomenon influenced by various interrelated factors, not solely caused by the characteristics of individual students.

These findings indicate that social isolation is a problem that requires attention in guidance and counseling services because it can affect students' social development. According to Prayitno (2017), healthy social relationships are an important part of individual development, so students need assistance when they encounter obstacles in interacting with their surroundings. Meanwhile, Tohirin (2019) explains that

guidance and counseling services play a role in helping students develop adjustment skills, build positive interpersonal relationships, and overcome various obstacles that arise in social life at school. Thus, the conditions of social isolation found in this study demonstrate the need for services that focus not only on problem solving but also on developing students' social skills so they can interact more effectively with their peers.

The findings of this study align with those of Yumanda et al. (2024), which showed that the quality of peer interactions influences students' social adjustment. Students who experience difficulties in building interpersonal relationships tend to experience social isolation more easily and participate less in group activities. These findings are also supported by Indriyani et al. (2021), who explain that the school social environment, particularly peer relationships, contributes to the development of students' social behavior. In this study, the formation of friendship groups (circles), as expressed by Guidance and Counseling teachers, indicates that peer group dynamics can influence students' levels of social acceptance. Therefore, understanding student relationship patterns is an important basis for guidance and counseling teachers in determining appropriate service delivery to meet students' needs (Yumanda et al., 2024; Indriyani et al., 2021).

Based on the results of previous research, theories, and studies, it can be understood that social alienation is a problem influenced by the interaction between individual factors and the school social environment. The existence of friendship groups (circles) and low social acceptance identified through sociometry indicate the importance of early identification of students who have the potential to experience difficulties in establishing interpersonal relationships. In the context of guidance and counseling, understanding the factors causing social alienation is the basis for guidance and counseling teachers in determining appropriate service strategies according to the needs of students. Therefore,

the results of this study show that identification through sociometry combined with interviews and observations provides comprehensive information regarding students' social conditions, so that individual counseling services can be designed more specifically to help students develop adjustment skills and build more positive social relationships in the school environment.

### ***3. Theme 3: the role of individual counseling services***

The research findings indicate that individual counseling services play a crucial role in assisting students experiencing social isolation in the school environment. Interviews revealed that guidance and counseling teachers not only provide services to students who volunteer but also proactively approach students who exhibit a tendency to withdraw from their social environment. This approach involves personal communication, providing personalized attention, and building relationships based on trust, ensuring students feel comfortable expressing their concerns.

Furthermore, guidance counselors also strive to engage students experiencing social isolation by helping them build better relationships with their peers. These findings suggest that individual counseling services serve not only as a means of problem-solving but also as a form of support that supports students' social development, in line with the goal of individual counseling services, which emphasize personalized assistance tailored to the client's needs (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019).

The findings of this study align with the concept of individual counseling services proposed by Prayitno (2017), who stated that individual counseling is a service aimed at helping clients understand their problems, find alternative solutions, and develop their potential to optimally adapt to their environment. In practice, the relationship between the counselor and client must be based on mutual trust, acceptance, empathy, and respect for the confidentiality of the

client's problems. Similarly, Tohirin (2019) explains that individual counseling services provide opportunities for students to express their feelings, thoughts, and experiences openly so that the counselor can provide assistance tailored to each individual's needs. Therefore, the personal approach implemented by the guidance and counseling teacher in this study indicates that individual counseling services are an appropriate medium to help students experiencing social isolation because they provide a space for students to obtain psychological support while developing social adjustment skills (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019).

The findings of this study align with those of Hutagalung et al. (2021), which demonstrated that individual counseling services play a role in helping students achieve their social developmental tasks through mentoring provided by guidance and counseling teachers. These services provide students with the opportunity to express their problems, receive assistance in finding alternative solutions, and develop their adjustment skills within the school environment. Consistent with these findings, the guidance and counseling teachers in this study not only provided services to students who volunteered but also implemented a proactive approach (picking up the ball) for students experiencing difficulties in social interaction. This approach demonstrates that individual counseling services function not only as a problem-solving effort but also as a form of mentoring that helps students develop their interaction skills and adjust to the school environment (Hutagalung et al., 2021; Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019).

Based on research findings, theories, and previous studies, it is clear that individual counseling services play a strategic role in assisting students experiencing social isolation. The guidance and counseling teacher's approach, through personal communication, personalized attention, and outreach strategies, demonstrates that the counseling process is not solely focused on resolving students' current problems but also on developing students' abilities to build more positive social relationships. According

to Prayitno (2017), individual counseling services aim to help clients achieve a more effective life through developing their potential and independent decision-making abilities. This opinion is supported by Corey (2021), who states that a counseling relationship built on empathy, acceptance, and trust is a crucial factor in encouraging behavioral change in clients. Therefore, individual counseling services in this study can be understood as a form of intervention that not only helps students overcome the social barriers they experience but also facilitates the process of sustainable social development (Prayitno, 2017; Corey, 2021; Hutagalung et al., 2021).

#### **4. Theme 4: transformation of social relations**

The results of the study indicate that individual counseling services not only focus on solving students' problems but also support the development of their social relationships. Based on the interview results, the guidance counselor builds closeness through personal communication, provides special attention, and helps students interact with their peers. This approach indicates that individual counseling services serve as a means to support students' social adjustment process in accordance with the objectives of individual counseling services (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019). Therefore, the transformation of social relationships in this study is understood as a gradual process of mentoring, not as a directly measurable change.

The findings of this study align with the objectives of individual counseling services, which are to help students understand themselves, develop their potential, and improve their ability to adapt to their social environment (Prayitno, 2017). Tohirin (2019) also explains that individual counseling provides opportunities for clients to openly express their problems so that the counselor can provide assistance tailored to their individual needs. Therefore, the personal approach implemented by the guidance counselor in this study reflects the

implementation of individual counseling services that are oriented towards the gradual development of students' social skills, not solely focused on solving the problems they face.

The findings of this study align with those of Hutagalung et al. (2021), who stated that individual counseling services contribute to helping students achieve social developmental tasks through a continuous mentoring process. This study demonstrated that a well-established counseling relationship can help students improve their ability to interact and adjust to the school environment. The results of this study reinforce these findings, as guidance counselors strive to build positive relationships with students and facilitate their interactions with peers as part of the mentoring process. Thus, individual counseling services can be understood as a strategy that supports the transformation of students' social relationships (Hutagalung et al., 2021; Prayitno, 2017).

Based on the results of previous research, theory, and studies, it can be understood that the transformation of social relationships in this study is a process facilitated through individual counseling services. Various efforts made by guidance counselors, such as a personal approach, providing attention, and mentoring in building relationships with peers, demonstrate a systematic effort to help students develop their social skills. Therefore, individual counseling services not only play a role in helping students overcome social problems but also become part of the process of establishing more positive social relationships in the school environment (Prayitno, 2017; Tohirin, 2019; Hutagalung et al., 2021).

#### **D. Conclusion**

The social relationships of students in the classroom demonstrate varying levels of social acceptance. Sociometric analysis identified that most students have good social relationships, but some still experience low

levels of social acceptance, potentially leading to social isolation. These findings were reinforced by observations and interviews, which indicated that friendship group dynamics and limited ability to interact are factors influencing the formation of social isolation in the school environment.

This study also shows that individual counseling services play a crucial role in assisting students experiencing social isolation. Guidance and Counseling teachers implement a personalized approach through warm communication, attentiveness, and ongoing support to enable students to build better relationships with their peers. Based on the research findings, social relationship transformation is understood as a process of support facilitated through individual counseling services to help students gradually develop their adjustment and social interaction skills. Therefore, utilizing sociometric data as a basis for identifying student needs can help guidance and counseling teachers provide more targeted services to support students' social development.

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