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Factors Causing and Efforts to Address Students' Late Arrival at School in Class VII D of UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang

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Abstract: *Student lateness is a disciplinary problem that reduces learning time and may trigger other violations. This study aims to describe the factors causing students to arrive late at school and the efforts to address this issue in Class VII D of UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through interviews with four Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers, two subject teachers, and four students involved in the issue, and were then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data credibility was examined through source triangulation. The findings indicate that lateness is caused by waking up late, staying up late playing on mobile phones or games, long distances and limited public transportation, household chores for students living with relatives, poor time management, and insufficient parental supervision. Lateness reduces learning time, prevents students from participating in the morning assembly, and increases the risk of other disciplinary violations. Measures to address lateness include recording late arrivals, individual and group counseling, classroom guidance services, classroom agreements, rewards, and collaboration among GC teachers, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and parents, including home visits when necessary. These efforts have reduced the frequency of lateness, although some students still struggle to change their behavior. Collaboration among all school stakeholders is essential in addressing student lateness.*

Keywords: *student lateness; contributing factors; intervention efforts; guidance and counseling; junior high school*

Abstrak: *Keterlambatan siswa merupakan masalah kedisiplinan yang mengurangi waktu belajar dan dapat memicu pelanggaran lain. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan faktor penyebab siswa datang terlambat ke sekolah dan upaya penanganannya di Kelas VII D UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dengan empat guru Bimbingan dan Konseling (BK), dua guru mata pelajaran, dan empat siswa yang terlibat, kemudian dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Kredibilitas data diperiksa dengan triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterlambatan disebabkan oleh bangun kesiangan, begadang bermain telepon genggam atau gim, jarak yang jauh dan keterbatasan transportasi umum, tugas rumah bagi siswa yang tinggal bersama kerabat, kurangnya pengaturan waktu, serta kurangnya pengawasan orang tua. Keterlambatan mengurangi waktu belajar, membuat siswa tidak mengikuti apel pagi, dan berisiko memicu pelanggaran kedisiplinan lain. Penanganan dilakukan melalui pendataan keterlambatan, konseling individual dan kelompok, layanan klasikal, kesepakatan kelas, pemberian penghargaan, serta kolaborasi guru BK, wali kelas, guru mata pelajaran, dan orang tua, termasuk kunjungan rumah bila diperlukan. Upaya tersebut menurunkan frekuensi keterlambatan, meskipun sebagian siswa masih sulit berubah. Kolaborasi seluruh pihak sekolah penting dalam menangani keterlambatan siswa.*

Kata kunci: *keterlambatan siswa; faktor penyebab; upaya penanganan; bimbingan dan konseling; sekolah menengah pertama*

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Introduction

Student lateness in arriving at school remains a recurring disciplinary problem at UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang. According to the Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers, the school gate closes at 7:30 a.m., and classes begin at the same time; however, some students have already arrived late by 7:15 a.m. The school classifies lateness as a school rule violation, so every student who arrives late is subject to disciplinary guidance.

Lateness has a direct impact on the learning process. Students who arrive late miss part of the lesson material, do not participate in the morning assembly, and must undergo disciplinary measures that take approximately 30 minutes, further reducing their classroom learning time. If repeated continuously, lateness may develop into other violations, such as frequent unexplained absences, and ultimately put students at risk of failing to advance to the next grade.

The issue of lateness is closely related to the responsibilities of GC teachers. Guidance and counseling services aim to help students overcome personal, social, learning, and career-related problems so that they can develop optimally (Prayitno & Amti, 2013). The implementation of these services at the primary and secondary education levels is regulated by Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 111 of 2014 concerning Guidance and Counseling in Primary and Secondary Education (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2014). In practice, GC teachers do not work independently but collaborate with homeroom teachers, subject teachers, student affairs staff, and parents.

The causes of lateness vary among students. Some arrive late because they stay up late, others because of long distances and transportation difficulties, while some must complete household chores before leaving for school. Therefore, appropriate interventions can only be designed once the underlying causes for each student have been understood. This study aims to (1) describe the factors causing Grade VII D students at UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang to arrive late at school and (2) describe the efforts undertaken by the school to address this lateness.

Method

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach was selected because the study aimed to describe circumstances as experienced and explained by the informants without testing hypotheses (Moleong, 2018 ; Sugiyono, 2019). The research was conducted in Class VII D at UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang from September to October 2026. The study focused on the factors contributing to students' late arrival at school and the efforts undertaken by the school to address the problem.

Participants, Sample, or Data Sources

The informants were selected purposively based on their knowledge of and direct involvement in the issue of student lateness. A total of ten informants participated in the study, consisting of four Guidance and Counseling (GC) teachers, identified as GBK-1 to GBK-4; two subject teachers, identified as GMP-1 and GMP-2; and four Grade VII D students involved in lateness, identified as S-1 to S-4. These informants were selected because they could provide information from different perspectives regarding the causes of student lateness and the efforts made to address it. To maintain confidentiality, the informants' real names were replaced with identification codes.

Instruments and Measures

The primary research instruments consisted of three interview guides, each designed for a specific informant group: GC teachers, subject teachers, and students. Each guide contained ten main questions tailored to the characteristics of the informants and the objectives of the study.

The interview guides for GC teachers and subject teachers covered the circumstances surrounding student lateness, contributing factors, consequences, intervention measures, forms of collaboration, challenges encountered, intervention outcomes, and recommended actions. Meanwhile, the student interview guide addressed experiences of arriving late, household and nighttime habits, travel to school, feelings when reprimanded, interventions received, parental assistance, and personal efforts to improve punctuality.

Interviews were used to obtain information directly from the informants. The data collection focused on two main areas: the factors causing students to arrive late at school and the efforts undertaken to address the problem.

Procedure and Research Ethics

Data were collected through interviews with the ten informants using the appropriate interview guide for each group. The interviews with GC teachers, subject teachers, and students were conducted to obtain information about experiences of lateness, its underlying causes, its consequences, and the measures implemented by the school to address the issue.

Information obtained from each informant group was subsequently examined and compared to identify similarities and differences in their accounts of the research problem. To maintain confidentiality, the informants were identified using the codes GBK-1 to GBK-4, GMP-1 and GMP-2, and S-1 to S-4. Information concerning informed consent, research authorization, and parental or guardian consent for student participants should be reported in

accordance with the procedures actually implemented during the study.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the three stages proposed by Miles et al. (2014)*:* data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, interview responses were selected, summarized, and categorized according to the two research focuses: factors contributing to student lateness and efforts to address it. Relevant information was retained, while information not directly related to the research focuses was not used as a primary basis for developing the findings.

During data display, the categorized information was organized into descriptive narratives to illustrate patterns in the causes of lateness and the measures implemented by the school. Conclusions were then drawn by interpreting the patterns identified in the data to address the research objectives.

Data credibility was assessed through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from GC teachers, subject teachers, and students regarding the same issues. This comparison was used to examine consistency across informants and strengthen the credibility of the research findings.

Results and Discussion

Results

Lateness Conditions

Lateness continues to occur relatively frequently, but its incidence has decreased since the school began recording students who arrive late (GBK-1, GBK-2). GBK-2 explained that initially, many students arrived after 7:30 a.m., but the number gradually decreased as the recording process continued. GBK-1 distinguished between two forms of lateness: missing the morning assembly and arriving late to class, resulting in missed learning activities. GBK-3 described lateness as a school violation, while GBK-4 considered it to occur primarily among certain students who lacked discipline.

Factors Contributing to Lateness

Interviews with teachers and students identified seven factors contributing to lateness, as summarized in Table 2. The most frequently mentioned factor was waking up late, which appeared in the responses of all four GC teachers, both subject teachers, and three of the four students.

Table 2. Factors Contributing to Student Lateness

Factor	Findings	Sources
Waking up late	Students wake up late and consequently leave for school late.	GBK-1, GBK-2, GBK-3, GBK-4, GMP-1, GMP-2, S-1, S-2, S-3
Staying up late	Students play on mobile phones or games until late at night; some students go to sleep between 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m.; others complete assignments and have difficulty falling asleep.	GBK-1, GBK-2, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4
Distance from home and transportation	Students live far from school, public transportation is crowded or arrives late, and some students walk to school. Students reported travel times of 10–20 minutes.	GBK-3, GBK-4, GMP-1, GMP-2, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4
Household chores and living with relatives	Students living with their grandmothers, aunts, or other relatives are required to clean the house or help at the market before leaving for school.	GBK-1, GMP-1
Lack of parental attention and supervision	Parents pay insufficient attention to household rules, leave for work too early to wake their children, or the students come from non-intact families.	GBK-1, GBK-4, GMP-2
Lengthy preparation and poor time management	Students spend too much time getting ready and having breakfast, or engage in playing and other activities before leaving for school.	S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4
Lack of awareness of time discipline	Students have not yet recognized the importance of being punctual.	GBK-1, GBK-4

These factors do not always occur independently. For one student, staying up late may lead to waking up late, which, combined with a long distance from home to school, further contributes to lateness. In addition, GBK-2 stated that during counseling interviews, students sometimes provide only general explanations, such as waking up late or

playing on their mobile phones, meaning that the underlying causes are not always fully revealed.

Consequences of Lateness

All teacher informants identified reduced learning time as the primary consequence of lateness. GBK-1 stated that students who arrive late miss several minutes to several hours of lessons, and their academic performance tends to decline. At this school, many students also miss the morning assembly, while some spend an extended period outside the classroom during breaks before returning to class. GBK-2 explained that disciplinary measures for late students, such as cleaning the toilets or sweeping rooms, take approximately 30 minutes, causing students to lose additional classroom learning time.

Some teachers implement classroom agreements. According to GBK-3, certain teachers do not allow late students to enter the classroom until the lesson has ended. GMP-2 reported a similar agreement in the class they teach: students arriving more than 10 minutes late are not permitted to enter the classroom, and the agreement is signed by the homeroom teacher and parents. GMP-2 also observed that late students often display indifference toward learning and do not participate fully in lessons. GBK-3 warned that repeated lateness could lead to other violations, such as unexcused absences, and ultimately result in students failing to advance to the next grade. From the students' perspective, S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4 described feeling embarrassed, uncomfortable, or afraid when reprimanded for arriving late.

Efforts to Address Student Lateness

Addressing student lateness involves several parties working through interconnected procedures, as presented in Table 3. The process begins with attendance and lateness records maintained by the student affairs department, followed by data review and the provision of services by GC teachers. Homeroom teachers and parents are subsequently involved when students fail to demonstrate behavioral improvement.

Table 3. Efforts to Address Student Lateness by Responsible Party

Responsible Party	Intervention Efforts	Sources
Student Affairs Department	Records students who arrive late and submits the records to GC teachers; imposes disciplinary measures.	GBK-2, GBK-3
Guidance and Counseling (GC) Teachers	Classifies records of students who arrive late once, twice, or more than three times in a month; calls students for individual or group counseling; monitors students every morning for one to two weeks; provides follow-up counseling if students are still late two to three times; delivers classroom guidance services; and rewards students who have no instances of lateness, unexcused absences, or truancy during a month.	GBK-1, GBK-2, GBK-3, GBK-4
Subject Teachers	Records the names of late students, provides guidance, reports cases to homeroom teachers or GC teachers, and implements classroom agreements.	GMP-1, GMP-2, GBK-2
Homeroom Teachers	Receives reports, informs parents about student lateness, and issues formal summons letters if no improvement occurs.	GBK-1, GBK-2, GMP-1, GMP-2
Parents	Are summoned and involved when students continue to arrive late more than five times after individual counseling.	GBK-1, GBK-4
Home Visits	Conducted jointly with homeroom teachers when parents fail to attend three summonses or when lateness occurs frequently. One GC teacher had never conducted a home visit because the student had already improved after receiving guidance.	GBK-1, GBK-3, GBK-4, GBK-2
Students	Go to bed on time, avoid staying up late, set alarms on their mobile phones, ask parents to wake them up, and prepare school supplies the night before.	S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4

Students confirmed the intervention measures implemented by the school. S-1 and S-2 explained that they were summoned by GC teachers for individual counseling, asked about the reasons for their lateness, given solutions, and asked to make agreements, while homeroom teachers provided advice. S-3 also mentioned receiving counseling from a GC teacher and advice from a homeroom teacher.

Regarding parental support, students reported that their parents helped by waking them up in the morning and reminding them not to stay up late or to prepare their school supplies the night before.

Challenges and Outcomes of the Interventions

The challenges reported by teachers included students who were difficult to change (GBK-1, GBK-4, GMP-2), students who were reluctant to open up and provided only general answers about the causes of their lateness (GBK-2), insufficient parental supervision at home (GBK-4), and students living with other people who had to complete household chores before leaving for school (GMP-1). GBK-1 stated that no significant challenges had been encountered because they had only recently begun working with Grade VII.

The outcomes of the interventions were considered fairly positive. GBK-1 and GBK-2 stated that the guidance provided had produced results and that the number of students who frequently arrived late had decreased. GBK-3 reported that some students in one class had begun to change their behavior. GBK-4, GMP-1, and GMP-2 observed that students had become more disciplined, more aware of the importance of time, and more willing to make efforts to arrive at school punctually.

Discussion

The factors contributing to student lateness can be classified into three domains. The individual domain includes waking up late, staying up late, and poor time management. The family domain includes insufficient parental supervision, household chores, and living arrangements with relatives. The environmental domain includes distance from home to school and transportation. Teachers and students agreed that waking up late and staying up late were the most common causes. These findings are therefore relatively robust because they emerged from two different sources.

Differences in perspectives were identified regarding family-related factors. Teachers emphasized insufficient parental attention and household chores, whereas all four students interviewed reported receiving assistance from their parents, for example, being woken up in the morning. This discrepancy may be attributable to differences in family circumstances among the students interviewed, as not all of them experienced the conditions described by teachers, such as living with relatives. Therefore, family-related factors need to be explored individually for each student and should not be assumed to apply to all students who arrive late.

Intervention efforts were implemented in stages. Records maintained by the student affairs department served as the basis for GC teachers to identify students requiring assistance. Services then began with individual or group counseling, daily monitoring, and follow-up counseling. Parents were involved only when students showed no improvement. This pattern is consistent with the function of guidance and counseling services, which is to help students address their own problems and develop optimally (Prayitno & Amti, 2013). Students' accounts of counseling, mutual agreements, and independent efforts, such as setting alarms, indicate that students participated actively in addressing the problem rather than merely receiving disciplinary measures.

The student affairs department, subject teachers, and homeroom teachers served as sources of information for GC teachers, while GC teachers acted as the primary point of intervention. All GC teachers identified collaboration as a key strategy for reducing student lateness. GBK-2 added that the underlying causes of each student's lateness must first be identified before selecting an appropriate solution, as these causes vary among students. This perspective is consistent with the findings of this study, which indicate that the seven contributing factors may occur in different combinations for individual students.

The findings also highlight two issues that warrant consideration by the school. First, some disciplinary measures actually reduce learning time, including punishments lasting approximately 30 minutes and prohibitions against entering the classroom for students who arrive late. Reinforcement-based approaches, such as the monthly rewards provided by GBK-2, offer encouragement without reducing instructional time. Second, GC teachers differ in their involvement of parents. GBK-2 had not involved parents because the students improved after receiving guidance, whereas GBK-1, GBK-3, and GBK-4 involved parents or conducted home visits. When lateness is caused by insufficient supervision at home or household responsibilities, parental involvement becomes difficult to avoid because school-based counseling alone cannot change circumstances within the home.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, student lateness in Class VII D at UPTD SMPN 16 Kota Kupang was attributed to seven factors: waking up late, staying up late while playing on mobile phones or games, long distances from home to school and limited transportation, household chores among students living with relatives, insufficient parental attention and supervision, lengthy preparation and poor time management, and a lack of awareness of time discipline. These factors may occur in different combinations for individual students. Lateness reduces learning time, prevents students from participating in the morning assembly, and increases the risk of other disciplinary violations, including unexcused absences and failure to advance to the next grade.

Efforts to address student lateness were implemented progressively through recordkeeping by the student affairs department, individual and group counseling, classroom guidance services, morning monitoring, classroom agreements, rewards, parental summonses, and home visits when necessary, involving GC teachers, homeroom teachers, and subject teachers. These efforts helped reduce the frequency of lateness and improve discipline among some students, although others continued to struggle with behavioral change, were reluctant to disclose the underlying causes of their lateness, or received insufficient supervision at home. Therefore, collaboration among GC teachers, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, the student affairs department, and parents should be strengthened through interventions tailored to the underlying causes of lateness for each student.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions (Optional)

The author was responsible for conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, data curation, formal analysis, writing the original draft, and reviewing and editing the manuscript.

Generative AI Disclosure

The author used a generative AI tool to assist with language translation and manuscript drafting. The author remains fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the article.

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