



## Management of Guidance and Counseling Services: A Multi-Site in State Islamic Junior High Schools

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### Abstract

This multi-site study aims to analyze the management of guidance and counseling (GC) at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, focusing on three management aspects: planning, implementation, and supervision. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies, and then analyzed continuously through data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to obtain a comprehensive understanding. The results indicate that the main difference lies in the methods of identifying needs, namely the Student Needs Questionnaire at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah and the Problem Disclosure Instrument at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah. However, the implementation mechanisms differ, in which MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah is more comprehensive by explicitly including the handling of high-achieving students in addition to students with problems, while MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah is more general. The implementation of core services (basic, responsive, specialization/career) also shows similarities. However, the focus of system support becomes a distinguishing factor. MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah prioritizes the implementation of assessment and follow-up, home visits, reporting, administration, and professional development of counselors. In contrast, MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah is oriented toward describing the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, participation in the GC Subject Teacher Forum (MGMP BK), and self-development seminars. Finally, in supervision/evaluation, both madrasahs demonstrate the same commitment, namely focusing on the sustainable success of services.

### Keywords:

Management; Guidance and counseling; MGMP BK, MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of education, which is increasingly expanding in the division of schools/madrasahs into specialized or vocational streams, certainly creates a need for guidance and counseling services to assist students in choosing majors. This situation creates challenges for students in deeply engaging with each field of study. Such developments are also related to abilities, attitudes, and interests in certain fields of study. All of this results in the need for each student to receive individual and specialized attention (Natalia, 2013). Thus, the need for guidance and counseling services in every educational institution has become increasingly evident (Muiz, M. R., & Fitriani, 2022; Satriah, 2020).

The importance of management in organizing an organization is absolutely essential; similarly, management is crucial in education. Institutions/companies



engaged in the management of goods require good management (Dahirin, 2024; Muniroh, 2017; Thoha, 2017). Educational institutions manage human beings and aim to create high-quality individuals; therefore, they require far more careful consideration than institutions that manage goods (Siahaan et al., 2023). The integration of management into guidance and counseling services is highly necessary. This integration, referred to as guidance and counseling management, is essential for guidance and counseling teachers or school counselors. Guidance and counseling teachers or school counselors need to possess guidance and counseling management skills (Bhakti, 2017; Hidayat et al., 2020) so that programs can run effectively and their benefits can be felt by all students within the school community (Sabrial et al., 2025). Although guidance and counseling management is very important, no schools have been found that fall into the category of good (high) guidance and counseling management; instead, schools with low levels of guidance and counseling service management have been identified (Anshari, 2019).

Based on the concept of the need for guidance and counseling services at every educational unit, the application of management science is required. Management is essential as one of the prerequisites for creating effective and efficient guidance and counseling services (Syahri et al., 2024). In addition, it serves as one of the main foundations for realizing the objectives of guidance and counseling services (Hakim, 2018). Guidance and counseling management in schools is an important process to support students' optimal development. This process involves planning, implementation, and evaluation of guidance and counseling services aimed at helping students overcome various problems and develop their character. The planning process includes setting goals, preparing programs, scheduling, and inventorying the required human resources and facilities (Albab, 2021). Good planning must include a clear vision that is approved by the school authorities (Akmalia et al., 2023; Hapsari et al., 2021).

In order to realize effective planning, the next step is to organize guidance and counseling services in a structured manner. Proper organization ensures that the established plans can be implemented efficiently and in accordance with predetermined objectives (Wijaya & Rifa'i, 2016). Therefore, after setting goals and preparing programs, it is necessary to establish a clear organizational structure, assign appropriate personnel, and arrange tasks and responsibilities in a well-coordinated manner. This will facilitate implementation and maximize the achievement of the agreed-upon planning objectives.

The organization of guidance and counseling services is carried out by determining personnel, forming an organizational structure, arranging main tasks and functions, and coordinating programs. This is important to ensure that all involved parties understand their roles and responsibilities (Jarkawi et al., 2018). After organizing guidance and counseling services, which includes assigning personnel, forming organizational structures, and arranging tasks and responsibilities, the next step is program implementation. This implementation process involves applying previously designed guidance principles, utilizing available facilities, and ensuring good cooperation among all involved parties. In this regard, it is important to ensure that program implementation runs smoothly through time flexibility and the use of various counseling techniques appropriate to meet students' needs.

The implementation of guidance and counseling programs includes the application of guidance principles, utilization of facilities, and cooperation among parties. Effective implementation requires time flexibility and the use of various counseling techniques (Wening & Hasanah, 2020). After the guidance and counseling program has been implemented by utilizing guidance principles, available facilities, and cooperation among parties, the next step is to evaluate the program implementation. Evaluation aims to assess the extent to which program objectives have been achieved and the effectiveness of the counseling techniques used. In this process, supervision that includes recording, evaluating outcomes, and identifying improvement measures becomes important to ensure that guidance and counseling services continue to develop and improve in quality. Evaluation is conducted to assess program achievement and implementation effectiveness. Supervision involves recording, outcome assessment, and improvement measures to enhance service quality (Wening & Hasanah, 2020).

The researcher previously conducted activities in schools for the purposes of interest and aptitude measurement, sociometric measurement, and other counseling instrumentation activities. On that occasion, the researcher had discussions with guidance and counseling teachers at public junior high schools/MTs. The key point was that they did not receive good management support from existing stakeholders. School principals with non-guidance and counseling backgrounds often consider guidance and counseling unimportant in schools, as evidenced by the exclusion of guidance and counseling from classroom subjects. Guidance and counseling teachers are only involved when students encounter problems; otherwise, they remain in the guidance and counseling office. Similar conditions were also found in several SMP/MTs in Takengon. This strengthens the assumption that poor management results in guidance and counseling services being less known and understood by the school community.

However, the researcher's field findings at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah show different and interesting conditions worthy of further study. Both schools have demonstrated more structured, strategic, and student-potential-oriented guidance and counseling management practices. At MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah, guidance and counseling teachers play a proactive role in supporting students' development, not only handling problematic cases but also actively identifying, nurturing, and developing each student's unique potential. The services provided include individual counseling, group guidance, information services, and self-development programs aimed at helping students recognize their strengths, overcome learning obstacles, and manage emotions and behavior positively. This approach reflects progressive and participatory guidance and counseling management, focusing on forming independent, adaptive, and high-achieving students.

Meanwhile, MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah also implements a comprehensive and well-planned guidance and counseling management system. Guidance and counseling teachers at this school actively provide services for potential development and problem handling through scheduled and structured approaches. With a daily rotating schedule system, each guidance and counseling teacher ensures easy access to counseling services for students, both through individual counseling sessions to explore interests and talents and group guidance to develop

social and emotional skills. This management strategy allows students to receive continuous and directed support, creating a more supportive school environment for holistic student development.

Each school has different patterns in implementing guidance and counseling services. According to (Rahmat, 2019) guidance and counseling services must include four components, namely basic services, responsive services, individual planning, and system support. Guidance and counseling in each school is tailored to students' needs, the environment, and aligned with the school's vision and mission. This study aims to examine the guidance and counseling management process at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, which includes planning, implementation, and evaluation processes in guidance and counseling services that are useful for developing students' potential, assisting with problems faced by students, and guiding students in adapting to their surrounding environments, whether school, community, or family. The uniqueness described above is inseparable from the hard work of teachers and staff within these institutions.

## **METHODS**

This research is a qualitative study, namely research that uses a natural setting with the intention of interpreting phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various available methods. The type of research used is a case study with a multi-site research design conducted in two or more locations. The sites selected as research objects generally share similarities; however, considering the conditions of each school, the implementation of the multi-site study in this research involves exploration, data collection, and analysis starting from the first site and then continuing to the second site. The study was conducted in 2025.

In qualitative research, commonly used methods include interviews, observation, and document utilization (Moleong, 2018). Research data sources are subjects from which data can be obtained (Arikunto, 2010). Informants in this study include the principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, guidance and counseling coordinator, and guidance and counseling teachers at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah. This study uses a qualitative approach with two research sites, so data analysis is conducted in two stages: single-site data analysis (individual site), which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, and cross-site data analysis (cross-site analysis) (Yin, 2000).

Checking data validity is essential to ensure that the data produced are credible and scientifically accountable. After the data have been successfully collected, their validity is tested through data triangulation. There are four techniques used to test data validity in this study, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### **Guidance and Counseling Planning**

#### **a. MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah**

One of the important roles in managing guidance and counseling services is planning. Every activity program requires careful planning so that all activities are directed toward achieving the expected goals. From the documentation study, it was found that the guidance and counseling program at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah has been holistically integrated with students' individual needs and is aligned with the vision and mission of the madrasah. This program is designed to comprehensively support students in academic, social-emotional, and career planning aspects, in line with the values and strategic direction of the institution.

The results of the interview with the principal of MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah explained that:

“the guidance and counseling planning is in accordance with students' needs and the vision and mission of MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah.” (FH)

Furthermore, the interview with the vice principal for curriculum explained that:

“the guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah is adjusted to students' needs and the vision and mission of the madrasah.” (AK)

In addition, the interview with the guidance and counseling teacher stated that:

“Guidance and counseling planning begins with distributing a student needs questionnaire. From this questionnaire, we can identify students' needs. After that, we prepare a guidance and counseling program that includes a description of needs, formulation of needs, program components, service areas, development of themes or topics, and activity plans. (FRD)”

Based on the results of documentation studies, interviews, and observations, the guidance and counseling planning process at this school is consistent and systematic, always beginning with the distribution of student needs questionnaires to identify students' needs. After the needs are identified, the next stage is the preparation of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, which includes a description of needs, formulation of needs, program components, service areas, development of themes or topics, and planned activities to be implemented. In addition, the parties involved in the process of preparing the guidance and counseling program at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah include the vice principal for curriculum and each homeroom teacher. Documentation studies also indicate the involvement of the principal and the school committee in supporting and aligning the program, demonstrating a comprehensive collaborative approach in the preparation of guidance and counseling services.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah prepares guidance and counseling (GC) planning carefully, beginning with program development aligned with students' needs and the vision and mission of the madrasah. Student needs identification is carried out specifically through the

Student Needs Questionnaire. Furthermore, the formulation of the GC program is a collaborative effort involving the madrasah principal, vice principal for curriculum, homeroom teachers, teachers, and the committee. All of this planning is then realized in the form of structured annual and semester programs.

#### **b. MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah**

In the field of guidance and counseling, planning is an essential phase that requires accuracy and systematization from program preparation to implementation. From the documentation study, it was found that guidance and counseling services at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah have been comprehensively integrated with the specific needs of each student and are aligned with the vision and mission of the school.

The results of the interview with the guidance and counseling teacher explained that:

“Guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah begins with distributing the Problem Disclosure Instrument (AUM) and predicting possible cases. From the results of the questionnaire and case predictions, students’ needs can be identified. Based on this identification, the guidance and counseling program is then prepared. This program has been adjusted to students’ needs as well as the vision and mission of MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, covering descriptions of needs, formulation of needs, program components, service areas, development of themes or topics, and activity plans.” (AS)

Strengthening this, the interview with the principal explained that:

“Guidance and counseling planning is already in accordance with students’ needs and the vision and mission of MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah. This includes descriptions of needs, formulation of needs, program components, service areas, development of themes or topics, and activity plans.” (SMR)

In addition, the interview with the vice principal for curriculum explained that:

“After these needs are identified, the next stage is the preparation of the guidance and counseling program. This indicates a structured and adaptive approach in designing guidance and counseling services.” (EN)

Based on documentation, interviews, and observations, guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah has been implemented systematically and relevantly. The identified needs then become the basis for preparing a comprehensive guidance and counseling program, including descriptions of needs, formulation of needs, program components, service areas, development of themes/topics, and activity plans. The parties involved in the preparation of the guidance and counseling program represent a collaborative effort involving various key elements in the school. The involvement of all these elements ensures that the program is designed holistically and responsively to various student needs. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that guidance and counseling (GC) planning at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah has been organized in the form of annual and semester programs.

## **Implementation of Guidance and Counseling**

### **a. MTs N 1 Aceh Tengah**

The results of observations reveal that the implementation of guidance and counseling services has been carried out in accordance with the planning and guidance and counseling program. However, it has not been implemented 100%. The implementation of counseling services is adjusted to the planning and organization that have been established. This is in line with the interview with the guidance and counseling teacher, who explained that:

“We focus on several main areas. For basic services, we routinely carry out classical guidance and group guidance to reach all students.” (AK)

In line with this, the interview with teacher FRD explained that:

“Furthermore, in the area of responsive services, we provide individual counseling and group counseling for students who need more personal attention, supported by consultation services, case conferences, and advocacy for handling more complex problems.”

In addition, the interview with teacher DD explained that:

“All of these services will not run optimally without strong system support, which includes the implementation and follow-up of periodic assessments, home visits to gain a deeper understanding of students’ contexts, the preparation and reporting of structured guidance and counseling programs, and of course, orderly guidance and counseling administration and the professional development of counselors.”

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation studies, the services implemented in accordance with the guidance and counseling program are basic services. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the guidance and counseling service program at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah has not yet reached 100% in terms of implementation.

### **b. MTs N 3 Aceh Tengah**

The implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah is based on carrying out work programs that were prepared at the beginning of the year and agreed upon jointly. Therefore, the implementation of guidance and counseling must follow a systematic work pattern so that the guidance and counseling program can run carefully and be implemented properly, and can be beneficial for student development.

The results of the interview with teacher SP explained that:

“For basic services, we routinely carry out classical guidance and group guidance to reach all students. Furthermore, in the area of responsive services, we provide individual counseling and group counseling for students who need more personal attention, supported by consultation services, case conferences, and advocacy for handling more complex problems.”

Similarly, teacher NY stated that:

“Equally important, we also have special programs to assist students in their interests and future career planning.”

This was further strengthened by the interview with teacher AS, who explained that:

“All of these services will not run optimally without strong system support, which includes describing the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, participation in MGBK, and seminars for the self-development of guidance and counseling teachers.”

Based on documentation studies, observations, and interviews, it can be concluded that the guidance and counseling service program at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah has been realized at approximately 70%. The implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah is carried out in accordance with the established planning and organization.

## **Evaluation of Guidance and Counseling**

### **a. MTs N 1 Aceh Tengah**

Evaluation is one of the activities carried out in the implementation of management to obtain efforts for improvement and refinement of guidance and counseling services at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah. In line with the interview with teacher AK, who stated that:

“The implementation of GC evaluation is carried out by the guidance and counseling coordinator, vice principal for curriculum, and the principal. In the evaluation we conduct, there are three main focus areas. First, we measure the success of providing guidance services to determine how effective these services are in achieving their goals of helping students. Second, we review all guidance and counseling activities that have been carried out in the madrasah, including each program and activity. Lastly, we consider it important to follow up on aspects that have not been achieved optimally. This means that if there are things that are less successful or optimal, we will find out the reasons and plan improvements in the future.”

In line with this, the interview with the principal explained that:

“The implementation of guidance and counseling evaluation in the madrasah involves cooperation between the guidance and counseling coordinator, the vice principal for curriculum, and the principal.”

Furthermore, the interview with the vice principal for curriculum explained that:

“The evaluation of guidance and counseling services in this madrasah is a collective effort involving the guidance and counseling coordinator, the vice principal for curriculum, and the principal.”

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the implementation of guidance and counseling evaluation at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah consistently has three main focus areas. The uniformity of views from various sources confirms the

madrasah's comprehensive approach in ensuring the quality and continuous development of guidance and counseling services.

#### **b. MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah**

Documentation studies found that the evaluation of guidance services in the madrasah focuses on three key areas. In accordance with the interview with the principal, who explained that:

"There are three main focuses that we assess. First, we evaluate the level of success of providing guidance services. Second, we also review all guidance and counseling activities that have been carried out in this madrasah. Lastly, and no less important, we follow up on things that have not been achieved optimally."

Furthermore, the interview with the vice principal for curriculum explained that:

"In evaluation, if there are things that are less successful or optimal, we will find out the reasons and plan improvements for the future."

The interview results with teacher SP explained that:

"In the evaluation process we carry out, three areas become the main focus. We first examine the effectiveness of the guidance services that have been provided, with the aim of understanding the extent to which these services have succeeded in helping students achieve their goals. Next, we conduct a comprehensive review of all guidance and counseling programs and activities that have been implemented in this madrasah. Lastly, and this is very crucial, we focus on follow-up actions on aspects that have not achieved maximum results."

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the evaluation of guidance services at MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah consistently prioritizes three main focus areas. These areas include measuring the success of guidance services in helping students achieve goals, conducting a comprehensive review of all guidance and counseling programs and activities that have been implemented, and, crucially, following up on aspects that have not been achieved optimally to identify causes and plan improvement steps in the future.

#### ***Discussion***

The cross-site similarities in guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah are that both institutions align GC programs with students' needs and the vision and mission of the madrasah, involve multi-party collaboration (madrasah principals, vice principals for curriculum, homeroom teachers, teachers, and committees) in program formulation, and prepare annual and semester GC programs. Meanwhile, the main cross-site difference between guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah lies in the method of identifying student needs: MTsN 1 uses the Student Needs Questionnaire, whereas MTsN 3 uses the Problem Disclosure Instrument.

Sukmadinata states that the development of guidance and counseling

programs must be based on actual needs in the field (Sukmadinata, 2007). To identify these needs, data collection must be conducted, including both primary data obtained directly from students, parents, and teachers, as well as secondary data from documents available at the school. Furthermore, according to (Nurihsan, 2016) it is added that in determining the planning of guidance and counseling services in madrasahs, there are several important aspects of activities that need to be carried out, namely: a) Analysis of students' needs and problems. b) Determination of the objectives of the guidance service program to be achieved. c) Analysis of the situation and conditions at the school. d) Determination of the types of activities to be carried out. e) Determination of the methods and techniques to be used in the activities. f) Assignment of personnel to carry out the planned activities. g) Preparation of facilities and funding for the implementation of the planned guidance activities.

Based on the cross-site findings from Site I and Site II, the author formulates a site proposition regarding guidance and counseling planning at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, namely that if MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah share similarities in planning GC programs aligned with students' needs and the vision and mission of the madrasah, involve multi-party collaboration in program formulation, and prepare annual and semester GC programs, but differ in the methods of identifying student needs (MTsN 1 uses the Student Needs Questionnaire and MTsN 3 uses the Problem Disclosure Instrument), then these specific differences in needs identification tools will significantly influence the type, focus, and depth of GC interventions prioritized and implemented by each madrasah, even though the overall planning framework is generally similar.

The similarities in the implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 in Aceh Tengah are: (a) the implementation of guidance and counseling service programs in accordance with established planning; (b) the implementation of basic services such as classical guidance and group guidance, while responsive services include individual counseling, group counseling, consultation, case conferences, and advocacy; and (c) aspects of student interests and career planning are also part of the services provided in both institutions.

The cross-site differences in the implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah lie in system support. MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah's system support includes the implementation and follow-up of assessments, home visits, preparation and reporting of GC programs, GC administration, and counselor professional development. Meanwhile, MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah's system support focuses on describing the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, participation in MGBK, and organizing seminars for the self-development of guidance and counseling teachers. Based on the cross-site results found from Site I and Site II, the author formulates a site proposition regarding the implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, namely that if the implementation of guidance and counseling at MTsN (both MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah) implements basic and responsive services, then aspects of student interests and career planning also become an integral part of the services provided. Therefore, support activities for guidance and counseling include data collection, home visits, library visits, guidance and counseling assessments, and case referrals (Nasution & Abdillah, 2019; Nubatonis et al., 2023).

The cross-site similarities in the evaluation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah are that evaluation has been carried out by examining the level of success of providing guidance services, reviewing all activities carried out in the madrasah, and following up on matters that have not been achieved optimally. Based on the cross-site results found from Site I and Site II, the author formulates a site proposition regarding the evaluation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 Aceh Tengah and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah, namely that if the evaluation of guidance and counseling at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah jointly focuses on service success levels and reviews all madrasah activities, then this comprehensive and follow-up-oriented evaluation approach will positively influence efforts to improve the quality of guidance and counseling services in both madrasahs.

Furthermore, the evaluation and assessment of guidance and counseling services are consistent with the views of Tolley & Rowland, who state that the effectiveness of guidance and counseling programs can be assessed using three criteria: process, intermediate outcomes, and final outcomes (Rusliana & others, 2023). Furthermore, evaluations need to be conducted so that students can experience the direct impact (Walidaini et al., 2024) whether in the form of progress, improvement, or changes—in line with the dynamics of the aspects being developed within a program (Gysber, 2012; Mentiana et al., 2024). The program evaluation is carried out through the following steps: formulating the research questions or designing data collection instruments, collecting and analyzing data, conducting evaluation meetings, preparing an evaluation report, and implementing follow-up actions (Sugiyo, 2010).

Based on the results of the research conducted, the novelty of this study reveals that a comprehensive Guidance and Counseling (BK) program is a service framework that is systematic, structured, and fully integrated into the educational curriculum to facilitate optimal student development. Furthermore, the mechanism for managing high-achieving students is a structured intervention system designed to manage, maintain, and optimize students' exceptional potential on an ongoing basis. This novelty is expected to serve as a key outcome offering a smart solution in efforts to improve, develop, and innovate the implementation of guidance and counseling services at State Junior High Schools (MTsN).

## **CONCLUSION**

Guidance and counseling (GC) planning at MTsN 1 and MTsN 3 Aceh Tengah has essential similarities. However, the main difference lies in the method of identifying student needs. In terms of implementation, both adapt GC planning and organization according to needs and the vision and mission of the madrasah. There are differences in the focus of system support implemented, namely that MTsN 1 emphasizes the implementation and follow-up of assessments, home visits, program reporting, administration, and counselor professional development, while MTsN 3 focuses on describing the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, participation in MGBK, and seminars for the self-development of GC teachers. Meanwhile, in evaluation activities, both focus on the success of the GC services provided. This shows a shared commitment to improving the quality of GC services sustainably in both institutions.

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