Digital Readiness of School Counselors for Hybrid Counseling: A Scoping Review and a Multilevel Competency Framework

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Abstract
Digital transformation has altered how school counseling is organized, delivered, documented, and extended beyond the physical school setting. Yet the literature uses heterogeneous terms including online counseling, virtual counseling, tele-counseling, digital counseling, technology integration, web-based guidance, and artificial intelligence making it difficult to determine what "readiness" for hybrid school counseling should encompass. This scoping review maps the recent Scopus-indexed literature relevant to school counselors' digital readiness and technology-mediated practice. A supplied Scopus export containing 100 records was screened in two stages. The temporal window was restricted to the most recent ten calendar years (2017–2025), and only records classified by Scopus as Document Type "Article" were eligible. This produced 48 records for title-and-abstract relevance screening. Sixteen sources met the Population–Concept–Context criteria and were included. The evidence base was geographically concentrated in the United States and Indonesia and methodologically diverse, comprising quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, research-and-development/system-development, and conceptual sources. Five overlapping themes were identified: practitioner digital readiness and adaptive competence; digitally mediated and hybrid service delivery; digital assessment, data, and program infrastructure; organizational and ethical conditions; and artificial intelligence and future-ready counseling. Digital self-efficacy, role clarity, institutional support, privacy, access, relationship quality, and human oversight repeatedly emerged as readiness conditions. A central gap is that the literature frequently examines online, virtual, or digital components but rarely operationalizes hybrid school counseling as a distinct, intentionally integrated service model. The review therefore proposes a multilevel readiness framework in which individual, practice, organizational, and ethical-relational readiness jointly shape hybrid counseling capability. Future research should validate multidimensional readiness measures, compare hybrid and single-modality counseling, and test implementation models across diverse school systems.

Keywords: school counseling; digital readiness; hybrid counseling; online counseling; virtual counseling; artificial intelligence

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INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has moved from being an optional support for school counseling to becoming part of the infrastructure through which many counseling functions are delivered. Within the literature represented in the present review, digital tools are used for communication, assessment, social–emotional learning, information delivery, data-informed decision making, web-based guidance activities, virtual counseling, and increasingly artificial intelligence (AI)-supported student support. This expansion has occurred unevenly. Some publications describe digital tools as extensions of established school counseling programs, whereas others treat online or virtual counseling as an alternative modality that emerged under conditions of disruption. Still others focus on digital transformation as an organizational change problem rather than a simple question of whether counselors possess technical skills (Crandall et al., 2020; Goodrich et al., 2020). Consequently, the issue facing contemporary school counseling is no longer whether technology will be present, but whether counselors and school systems are prepared to integrate it deliberately, ethically, and in ways that preserve the relational quality of counseling.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition by requiring schools to maintain counseling and wellness support while face-to-face access was restricted. Studies of school counseling during the first wave of the pandemic documented rapid changes in role performance, service delivery, and organizational demands. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) described how remote and hybrid schooling intensified the need for school counseling while also exposing role ambiguity and organizational constraints. Villares et al. (2022), using data from 589 school counselors, identified distinct service-delivery profiles during the pandemic and showed that counselors who remained focused on comprehensive counseling, consultation, coordination, and curriculum functions differed from counselors whose work became more reactive and burdened by noncounseling duties. At the school-system level, Calvert et al. (2022) found that remote provision of wellness services depended on motivation and capacity, illustrating that readiness is an organizational as well as an individual characteristic.

The pandemic, however, did not create the digital transition from nothing. Before the emergency shift to remote services, school counseling scholarship had already begun to address technology integration. Ifdil et al. (2019), for example, described an online assessment system designed to help school counselors identify student learning problems more efficiently. Goodrich et al. (2020) argued that digital communication tools could be integrated across the delivery components of the ASCA National Model, while Crandall et al. (2020) examined barriers to data-driven decision making and the potential of computerized systems to reduce time burdens and structure information for professional use. Mulawarman et al. (2020) similarly positioned flipped classroom guidance as an innovation for technology-rich school counseling services. These studies indicate that the

contemporary digital turn should be understood as the convergence of several developments: communication technologies, web-based service platforms, digital assessment, program data, online counseling, hybrid schooling, and AI.

A key challenge is conceptual fragmentation. The literature uses terms such as digital counseling, online counseling, virtual counseling, tele-counseling, technology-enhanced counseling, digitally responsive counseling, and web-based guidance. The terms overlap but are not interchangeable. “Online” and “virtual” generally refer to a mode of interaction in which counselor and student are not co-located. “Digital counseling” may include synchronous interaction, asynchronous communication, digital content, apps, online assessment, or digitally mediated self-help. “Technology-enhanced” practice can also refer to digital tools used within otherwise face-to-face services. “Hybrid” counseling, in the sense used in this review, is broader: it refers to intentional integration of face-to-face and digitally mediated components within a coherent counseling service pathway. Under this definition, hybrid counseling is not simply a temporary mixture of modalities. It is a planned service architecture in which modality is selected according to student need, access, confidentiality, risk, task, and counselor judgment.

This distinction matters because the evidence base often supports the components of hybrid practice without explicitly naming a hybrid model. Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023), for instance, reported that school counselors in Lebanon perceived virtual counseling as flexible but also encountered privacy concerns, altered workplace dynamics, limitations in tool use, and a need for preparation and training. Akgül and Atalan Ergin (2022) found that resilience was associated with more favorable attitudes toward online school counseling and that digital self-efficacy played an important role in this relationship. Hidayat and Usanto (2024) reported that digital counseling platforms improved access and helped students manage academic and emotional concerns, yet students’ interpersonal connection with counselors was weaker than in face-to-face counseling. Together, these findings suggest that readiness for hybrid practice cannot be reduced to technical competence. Counselors must be able to decide when a digital modality adds value, when face-to-face contact is preferable, and how to move between modalities without sacrificing continuity, safety, or therapeutic alliance.

The notion of readiness is similarly multidimensional. At the individual level, readiness includes digital self-efficacy, attitudes toward technology, confidence in online communication, and adaptability. At the practice level, it includes competence in conducting virtual sessions, using digital assessment, managing online boundaries, interpreting data, and selecting appropriate tools. At the organizational level, readiness includes infrastructure, institutional support, training, workload allocation, role clarity, policy, and implementation capacity. At the ethical-relational level, it includes privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, accessibility, equity, cultural responsiveness, data governance, and the preservation of human judgment and relationship quality. These levels are interdependent. A counselor may be technically competent yet unable to deliver high-quality digital services when the school lacks secure platforms, clear procedures, or protected time. Conversely, an institution may possess strong infrastructure but obtain weak implementation if counselors lack confidence, ethical guidance, or meaningful professional development.

Recent research also adds AI to the readiness problem. Su et al. (2024) evaluated an AI-supported system intended to enhance school counseling for elementary students with emotional disorders by extending reflection and counselor–student dialogue through a digital journaling platform. Al-Shraifin et al. (2025) examined ChatGPT as a

supplementary school counseling tool and emphasized potential benefits in responsiveness and personalization alongside risks related to bias, privacy, AI literacy, and the need for human oversight. AI therefore expands digital readiness beyond the ability to operate platforms. Counselors must increasingly be able to judge the reliability, appropriateness, explainability, confidentiality, and relational consequences of AI-supported services.

Despite this growing body of work, the knowledge base remains difficult to interpret for two reasons. First, studies are distributed across counseling, educational technology, school mental health, information systems, psychology, and education journals. Second, many studies focus on particular tools or emergency conditions rather than on an integrated readiness construct. As a result, it is not yet clear which dimensions of readiness recur across the literature, how the field has moved from emergency online delivery toward planned hybrid practice, or which aspects remain under-researched.

A scoping review is appropriate when a field is conceptually heterogeneous, when evidence includes multiple study designs, and when the primary objective is to map concepts, methods, and gaps rather than estimate a pooled effect (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Levac et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2020). The present review therefore maps a recent Scopus-indexed corpus on technology-mediated school counseling and interprets it through the lens of readiness for hybrid practice. The review follows the broad structure used in contemporary scoping reviews: explicit eligibility criteria, transparent screening, evidence charting, descriptive mapping, thematic synthesis, and identification of implications and limitations (Tricco et al., 2018).

The review is guided by four questions. First, what are the publication, geographic, and methodological characteristics of recent Scopus-indexed articles relevant to technology-mediated school counseling? Second, what forms of digital, online, virtual, web-based, and AI-supported practice are represented? Third, what individual, practice, organizational, and ethical-relational conditions are associated with readiness for technology-mediated school counseling? Fourth, what gaps must be addressed to develop and evaluate intentional hybrid school counseling models? By answering these questions, the review aims to move the discussion from "technology use" toward a more precise account of what school counselors and school systems need in order to deliver integrated, flexible, and ethically robust hybrid counseling.

METHOD

Review Design

The review was designed as a scoping review because the objective was to map the breadth and characteristics of a heterogeneous body of literature rather than calculate an overall intervention effect. The methodological logic follows the stages described by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), later refinements emphasizing transparent question formulation, iterative charting, and interpretive synthesis (Levac et al., 2010), and updated guidance for scoping reviews (Peters et al., 2020). Reporting was informed by the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) where applicable (Tricco et al., 2018).

The review is intentionally described as an export-based scoping review. The data source was a Scopus CSV export supplied for analysis on August 9, 2026. The file contained 100 bibliographic records and 45 metadata fields, including authors, title, year, source title, abstract, author keywords, index keywords, citations, DOI, affiliations, language, and Scopus document type. The exact search string used to generate the Scopus export was not embedded in the CSV file. Therefore, this review does not

reconstruct or claim an original database search strategy that is not supported by the supplied data. Instead, the 100 records in the export constitute the identification set, and the screening process begins from that fixed corpus. This limitation is addressed explicitly below.

Temporal and Publication-Type Eligibility

The phrase “the most recent ten years” was operationalized as the ten complete calendar-year labels ending in the year of the export: 2017 through 2025, inclusive. Records with publication years earlier than 2017 were excluded. The user-specified publication-type criterion was applied exactly: only records whose Scopus “Document Type” field was “Article” were eligible. Book chapters, conference papers, reviews classified by Scopus as Review, and books were excluded regardless of topical relevance.

Applying the year criterion reduced the corpus from 100 to 80 records. Within those 80 records, 48 were classified as Article, while 32 were non-Article sources (23 book chapters, seven conference papers, and two books). The 48 remaining articles then proceeded to topic-relevance screening.

Population–Concept–Context Criteria

Topic-relevance screening used a Population–Concept–Context (PCC) framework. The Population dimension included school counselors, guidance and counseling teachers, professional school counselors, school counseling services, or school-based service systems in which the counseling role was explicitly identifiable. Studies centered on other professional groups such as teachers, school leaders, pediatric clinicians, rehabilitation counselors, or university counseling populations were excluded unless the abstract clearly connected the intervention or implementation process to school counseling practice.

The Concept dimension included technology-mediated counseling and counseling-support functions. Eligible concepts comprised online counseling, virtual counseling, tele-counseling, digital counseling, web-based guidance, digital assessment, digitally supported school counseling programs, counselor-facing data systems, technology integration into school counseling, AI-supported counseling, and conditions directly related to counselor readiness such as digital self-efficacy, attitudes, training, role adaptation, organizational readiness, privacy, or technology-related barriers. Articles were excluded when school counselors were mentioned but the substantive focus had no meaningful digital, online, virtual, hybrid, AI, or technology-integration component.

The Context dimension was primary or secondary school counseling or a directly comparable school-based guidance and counseling setting. University counseling, medical counseling, vocational rehabilitation counseling, and general counselor education were excluded when the school counseling context was not explicit. Articles about digital school programs were also excluded when the role of school counseling or a counseling professional could not be identified from the title and abstract.

Screening Process

Screening occurred in two stages. Stage 1 was a rule-based eligibility check using the Scopus metadata fields for year and document type. This stage was deterministic and reproducible from the supplied CSV. Stage 2 was manual title-and-abstract screening of the 48 articles that passed Stage 1. Each record was assessed against the PCC criteria described above. Ambiguous studies were retained only when the abstract explicitly connected digital technology to school counseling practice, a school counseling service, or a counselor-facilitated school program.

Thirty records were excluded at Stage 2. Fourteen were outside the school counseling population or context; seven were related to counseling or school mental health but did not make the school counselor role sufficiently identifiable; and nine contained school counseling terminology but lacked a substantive digital, online, virtual, hybrid, AI, or technology-integration focus. Sixteen articles met all eligibility criteria and were included in the synthesis. Figure 1 summarizes the screening process.

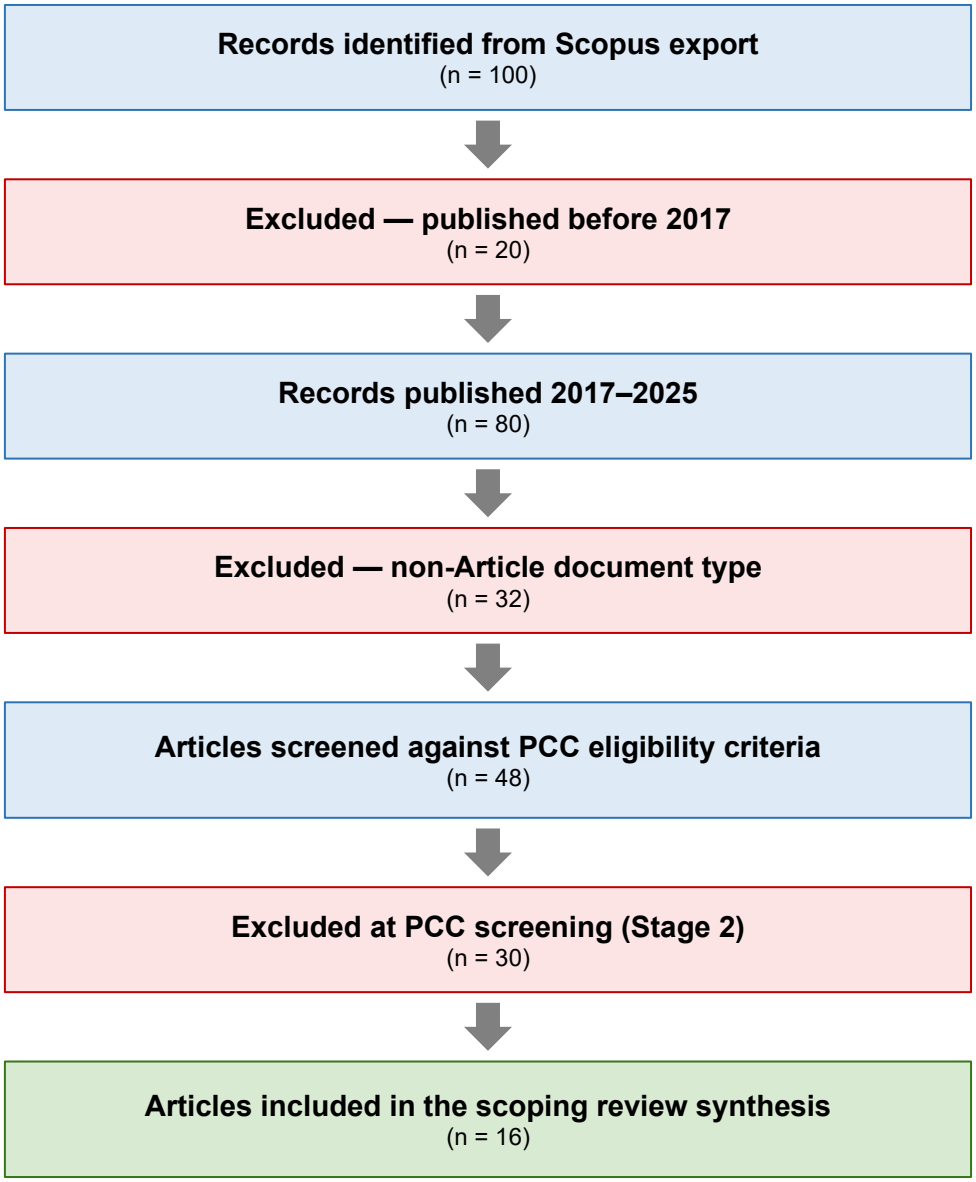


Figure 1. Flow of records through the Scopus export-based screening process

Data Charting

For each included article, bibliographic and descriptive information was charted from the Scopus export: year, authors, title, journal, DOI, abstract, keywords, affiliations, and citation count. Additional analytic fields were coded from titles and abstracts: country of the first listed affiliation; primary study design; participant or data-source characteristics when reported in the abstract; digital modality or technology; primary counseling function; barriers or facilitators; and relevance to digital readiness. Because the export contained abstracts

rather than full-text articles, methodological details were charted conservatively. When an abstract did not report a sample size or procedure, the field was recorded as not reported rather than inferred.

Primary study design was coded into five broad categories to support descriptive mapping: quantitative/experimental or survey, qualitative, mixed methods, research-and-development/system development, and conceptual/analytical. The categories represent the dominant design reported in the abstract rather than a formal methodological quality judgment.

Synthesis

The synthesis combined descriptive counts with qualitative thematic analysis. Publication counts were summarized by year, country, and primary study design. Author keywords were inspected to identify recurring terminology. Thematic coding then focused on the conditions that appeared to enable or constrain technology-mediated school counseling. Codes were iteratively grouped into five overlapping themes: (a) practitioner digital readiness and adaptive competence; (b) digitally mediated and hybrid service delivery; (c) digital assessment, data, and program infrastructure; (d) organizational and ethical conditions; and (e) AI and future-ready school counseling.

The thematic categories were not treated as mutually exclusive because a single article could address several dimensions of readiness. For example, a study of virtual counseling perceptions could simultaneously provide evidence about counselor competence, privacy, relationship quality, and organizational preparation. Frequencies associated with themes therefore indicate the number of included sources contributing to a theme, not independent partitions of the evidence.

Critical Appraisal

A formal risk-of-bias or quality appraisal was not conducted. This decision is consistent with the mapping purpose of a scoping review and with the heterogeneity of the included sources, which ranged from empirical studies to conceptual articles. In addition, the analysis was based on bibliographic metadata and abstracts rather than complete reports, making formal appraisal inappropriate. Study design and evidentiary limitations are instead considered narratively in the Results and Discussion.

Table 1. Eligibility criteria applied to the supplied Scopus corpus

Criterion	Included	Excluded
Publication years	2017–2025 inclusive	Before 2017
Scopus document type	Article	Book chapter, conference paper, book, or other non-Article type
Population	School counselors/guidance counselors or explicitly identifiable school counseling services	Other professions or counseling populations without school counseling relevance
Concept	Digital/online/virtual/tele/hybrid/AI counseling; web-based guidance; digital assessment/data; technology readiness/competence	School counseling topics without a substantive technology-mediated component
Context	Primary/secondary school counseling and directly comparable school guidance settings	University, medical, rehabilitation, leadership, or general education contexts not tied to school counseling

Criterion	Included	Excluded
Evidence used for screening	Title, abstract, keywords, and bibliographic metadata in the supplied export	Claims requiring unavailable full-text detail were not inferred

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Study Selection

The supplied Scopus export contained 100 records. Twenty records were published before 2017 and were excluded by the ten-year criterion. Of the 80 records published from 2017 through 2025, 48 were Scopus Document Type Article and 32 were other publication types. Title-and-abstract screening of the 48 articles excluded 30 for population, context, counseling-role, or digital-focus reasons. Sixteen articles were included in the final synthesis.

The flow demonstrates that document-type restriction alone was insufficient to define a coherent evidence base. More than one third of the 48 recent articles that met the formal publication filters remained topically outside the intended scope. This was particularly important because the export contained records in which terms such as counseling, readiness, hybrid, digital, or school referred to substantially different professional contexts. The PCC screen therefore served as the substantive boundary for the review.

Publication and Geographic Characteristics

The 16 included articles were published between 2019 and 2025; no eligible article in the supplied corpus was published in 2017 or 2018. Publication activity was uneven but clearly increased after 2019. One article was published in 2019, three in 2020, one in 2021, four in 2022, one in 2023, four in 2024, and two in 2025. The largest annual counts were therefore observed in 2022 and 2024. Figure 2 shows the distribution.

The articles were highly dispersed across publication outlets: all 16 appeared in different source titles. This dispersion supports the premise that technology-mediated school counseling is an interdisciplinary topic rather than a literature concentrated within a single counseling journal. The sources included counseling journals, educational technology journals, psychology journals, education journals, information systems outlets, and multidisciplinary journals.

Using the first listed affiliation as a descriptive indicator, seven articles originated from the United States and five from Indonesia. One article each had a first affiliation in Taiwan, Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. The Jordan-led article also included Saudi Arabian affiliation. Thus, 12 of 16 sources (75.0%) were concentrated in the United States and Indonesia. The geographic pattern is important because readiness is likely to be shaped by infrastructure, policy, school counselor roles, training systems, and cultural expectations. Findings from the corpus should therefore not be treated as globally representative.

The Scopus “Cited by” field in the supplied export ranged from 0 to 38 citations across included articles, with a median of 5.5. These counts are time-dependent and were not used to weight evidence. Their primary value is descriptive: earlier pandemic-era studies had accumulated more citations than very recent 2025 publications.

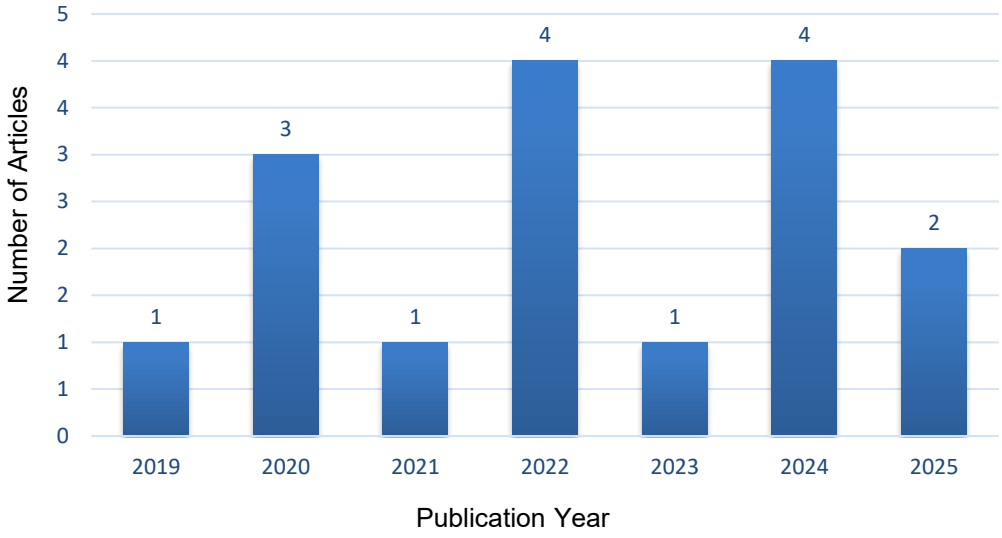


Figure 2. Distribution of included articles by publication year

Methodological Characteristics

The evidence base was methodologically heterogeneous. Four sources were primarily quantitative or experimental/survey studies, including a study of an AI-supported school counseling system (Su et al., 2024), a structural equation model of attitudes toward online school counseling (Akgül & Atalan Ergin, 2022), a large survey-based analysis of counseling service profiles during COVID-19 (Villares et al., 2022), and a survey of technology barriers in professional school counseling (Crandall et al., 2020). Three sources were primarily qualitative: Hidayat and Usanto (2024) on students' experiences with digital counseling platforms, Calvert et al. (2022) on school readiness to maintain wellness support during shutdowns, and Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) on school counselors' virtual counseling experiences.

Two studies used mixed methods. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) combined survey and focus-group data to document school counselors' work during COVID-19, while Thierry et al. (2022) combined large-scale implementation data from 6,657 schools with interviews concerning counselor-facilitated implementation of a digital social–emotional learning program. Three articles were classified as research-and-development or system-development studies: Suryawati et al. (2024) developed and validated a web-based counseling platform; Ifdil et al. (2019) described an online assessment system; and Gading et al. (2025) developed and tested a technology-enhanced digital counseling model. Four sources were conceptual, analytical, or literature-based: Williams et al. (2024), Goodrich et al. (2020), Al-Shraifin et al. (2025), and Mulawarman et al. (2020).

This diversity is useful for scoping because it captures the field's multiple forms of knowledge production, but it also limits direct comparison. The empirical literature does not yet converge on a common definition of digital readiness, a shared competency instrument, or a standardized outcome set for hybrid school counseling.

Table 2. Characteristics of the included evidence sources

Study	Country	Design/data source	Digital focus	Key readiness contribution
Ifdil et al. (2019)	Indonesia	System development; sample not reported in abstract	Online AUM SP.1 PTSDL assessment	Digital assessment may reduce manual processing burden and support identification of student learning problems.
Mulawarman et al. (2020)	Indonesia	Literature study / conceptual	Flipped classroom guidance	Hybrid distribution of pre-class and in-class guidance activities can support engagement and service innovation.
Crandall et al. (2020)	United States	Quantitative survey; 263 school counselors	Data systems / digital transformation	Time and data barriers constrained data-driven practice; computerized systems were proposed to automate and structure counselor workflows.
Goodrich et al. (2020)	United States	Conceptual	Interactive digital communication across ASCA delivery	Technology should be embedded across comprehensive school counseling rather than treated as an isolated add-on.
Savitz-Romer et al. (2021)	United States	Mixed methods; survey and focus groups	Remote/hybrid school counseling during COVID-19	Role ambiguity and organizational constraints affected counselors' capacity to meet increased student needs.
Akgül & Atalan Ergin (2022)	Turkey	Quantitative SEM; 149 school counselors	Online school counseling	Resilience and digital self-efficacy were associated with more positive attitudes toward online counseling.
Calvert et al. (2022)	United States	Qualitative; 50 personnel from 39 schools	Remote wellness and counseling support	Readiness depended on motivation and general/innovation-specific capacity during rapid transition.
Thierry et al. (2022)	United States	Mixed methods; 6,657 schools + 5 support staff	Digital SEL program	Policy, buy-in, and staff capacity influenced whether counselors or teachers facilitated implementation.
Villares et al. (2022)	United States	Quantitative; 589 school counselors	Pandemic-era counseling service delivery	Comprehensive versus reactive service profiles differed in counseling focus, noncounseling duties, and burnout.
Jaber & Al-Hroub (2023)	Lebanon	Qualitative; 7 interviews + 1 focus group	Virtual counseling	Flexibility coexisted with privacy, workplace, tool-use, communication, and training challenges.

Study	Country	Design/data source	Digital focus	Key readiness contribution
Hidayat & Usanto (2024)	Indonesia	Qualitative; sample not reported in export abstract	Digital counseling platform	Access and emotional/academic support improved, but interpersonal connection was weaker than face-to-face counseling.
Su et al. (2024)	Taiwan	Experimental evaluation; 22 elementary students	AI-supported counseling + digital journaling	AI-supported reflection extended counseling interaction and was evaluated as an enhancement to school counseling.
Suryawati et al. (2024)	Indonesia	R&D/validation; 6 IT experts + 39 users	WAHANA BIKONS web platform	High content-validity ratings supported interactive web media for school counseling services.
Williams et al. (2024)	United States	Conceptual / practice analysis	Tele-counseling and technology integration	Digital counseling requires ethical decision-making and collaborative consultation, especially for students with disabilities.
Al-Shraifin et al. (2025)	Jordan / Saudi Arabia	Simulation and literature-based analysis	ChatGPT / generative AI	Potential efficiency and access benefits are conditional on AI literacy, privacy, bias management, and human oversight.
Gading et al. (2025)	Indonesia	R&D (ADDIE); 280 elementary students	Mobile/online MCBH digital counseling	Technology-enhanced counseling improved reported emotional regulation, learning comfort, and happiness.

Theme 1: Practitioner Digital Readiness and Adaptive Competence

Seven of the 16 sources contributed directly to a practitioner-readiness theme. The clearest evidence came from Akgül and Atalan Ergin (2022), who studied 149 school counselors during the pandemic and reported that greater resilience was associated with more positive attitudes toward online school counseling. Digital self-efficacy was also positively related to attitudes and functioned as an important explanatory mechanism. This finding places digital readiness within a psychological as well as technical frame: counselors' confidence in their capacity to use digital tools can shape whether they view online practice as workable and legitimate.

Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) broadened the concept through qualitative evidence. School counselors described flexibility as an advantage of virtual counseling but also reported privacy concerns, altered workplace dynamics, limited use of available tools, and the need to develop new methods of communication. Their findings indicate that competence is not simply operational knowledge of a platform. Virtual counseling requires adaptation of communication cues, session management, and methods for understanding students when some nonverbal information is reduced or transformed.

Goodrich et al. (2020) similarly argued that professionally responsive digital practice requires counselors to integrate technology into the functions of a comprehensive school counseling program rather than treat digital tools as detached add-ons. Crandall et

al. (2020), in a survey of 263 school counselors, found that time and data-related barriers constrained data-driven work, even though computerized systems could potentially automate tasks and improve identification of patterns in student information. In this context, readiness includes both competence and the ability to translate digital outputs into professional decisions.

Pandemic-era studies also show that readiness is adaptive. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) described counselors working under rapid shifts to remote and hybrid schooling while organizational role ambiguity remained unresolved. Villares et al. (2022) found that school counselors adopted different service profiles during the first pandemic wave; the comprehensive profile preserved more counseling, consultation, coordination, and curriculum work, whereas reactive practice was associated with greater noncounseling duties and burnout. These studies suggest that digital readiness is partly visible in counselors' ability to maintain core professional functions when delivery conditions change.

At the school level, Calvert et al. (2022) used the Readiness = Motivation × General Capacity × Innovation-Specific Capacity heuristic to analyze schools' response to remote wellness needs. Although the study did not isolate counselor competence, it demonstrates that the capacity to provide counseling-related support under digital conditions depends on broader readiness resources. Individual competence can therefore be undermined or enabled by the surrounding organization.

Taken together, the practitioner-readiness literature supports at least four individual-level components: digital self-efficacy, adaptive communication, professional role continuity, and data/technology confidence. What remains underdeveloped is measurement. Only one included study explicitly operationalized digital self-efficacy, and no article in the corpus presented a comprehensive psychometric instrument designed specifically to assess school counselor readiness for hybrid counseling.

Theme 2: Digitally Mediated and Hybrid Service Delivery

Ten sources addressed the design, delivery, or consequences of digitally mediated school counseling. The evidence spans synchronous virtual interaction, web-based services, digital counseling platforms, flipped guidance, digital counseling models, and technology-supported communication.

The pandemic studies provide the strongest evidence that mode of delivery affects both access and professional practice. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) placed school counseling within the context of remote and hybrid schooling, highlighting the need to sustain student support despite reduced physical access. Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) found that virtual counseling provided flexibility in time and method but changed the counseling environment and introduced privacy and communication challenges. Hidayat and Usanto (2024) similarly reported that digital counseling platforms could facilitate access and help students manage academic stress and anxiety, but the interpersonal relationship was perceived as weaker than in face-to-face counseling.

The development studies illustrate how digital modalities can extend specific counseling functions. Suryawati et al. (2024) developed WAHANA BIKONS, a web-based platform incorporating games, discussions, and quizzes. Validation scores reported in the abstract were high among both information-technology experts and users, suggesting perceived feasibility for interactive school counseling. Gading et al. (2025) integrated mobile applications and online platforms with a Mindfulness Cognitive Behavioral Harmony model and reported improvements in emotional regulation, learning comfort, and happiness among 280 elementary students.

Mulawarman et al. (2020) conceptualized flipped classroom guidance as a way to distribute counseling-related learning activities across pre-class and in-class phases. Although this was a literature-based rather than experimental article, it is important for hybrid counseling because it treats modality as an instructional design decision: some activities can occur before direct contact, while discussion, clarification, and counselor interaction can be reserved for synchronous time.

Williams et al. (2024) considered tele-counseling in relation to ethical decision-making and collaborative consultation, emphasizing that digital delivery must be embedded in professional and school-system processes. Goodrich et al. (2020) likewise framed technology as part of the comprehensive counseling delivery system rather than an isolated intervention. Thierry et al. (2022) showed that digital programming can also change who delivers schoolwide services: the Second Step digital program was implemented in some schools through counselor-facilitated models and in others through teacher-facilitated models, with policy and capacity conditions influencing implementation patterns.

Despite this variety, direct research on intentionally designed hybrid counseling was rare. Only one included abstract explicitly used the term “hybrid” in describing the schooling context (Savitz-Romer et al., 2021), and none of the included articles evaluated a clearly specified hybrid school counseling protocol that prospectively integrated face-to-face and digital sessions according to decision rules. The field has therefore accumulated evidence about digital components without yet establishing a mature evidence base for hybrid counseling as a distinct service model.

Theme 3: Digital Assessment, Data, and Program Infrastructure

Five sources highlighted digital systems that support assessment, data use, or program implementation. This theme is especially important because hybrid readiness is not limited to the counseling encounter. It also includes the infrastructure used before, between, and after sessions.

Ifdil et al. (2019) described an online AUM SP.1 PTSDL system designed to help school counselors identify student learning problems more efficiently than manual processing. The underlying readiness issue is workflow integration: digital assessment has value when it reduces administrative burden and allows counselors to allocate time and attention to interpretation and intervention. Crandall et al. (2020) extended this point by showing that school counselors experienced barriers to data-driven decision making and by arguing that computerized systems could structure information and automate tasks. Digital readiness therefore includes data literacy and not merely communication-platform competence.

Suryawati et al. (2024) demonstrated the programmatic potential of web-based interactive media, where counseling content can be structured through discussions, quizzes, and games. Thierry et al. (2022) used usage records from thousands of schools to examine implementation of a digital social–emotional learning program, illustrating how platform data can become an implementation resource. Su et al. (2024) added an AI-enabled layer by integrating a digital journaling system into counseling for elementary students with emotional disorders. Such systems blur the distinction between assessment, reflection, intervention, communication, and progress monitoring.

The evidence suggests that a readiness framework for hybrid school counseling should assess whether counselors can manage digital information across the counseling cycle. Competence should include selecting appropriate tools, interpreting digital assessment outputs, protecting data, documenting services, monitoring engagement, and

deciding when digitally generated information requires direct follow-up. The corpus provides examples of these functions but does not yet establish standardized competencies or minimum technical requirements.

Theme 4: Organizational and Ethical Conditions

Eight sources emphasized that digital school counseling is embedded in organizational and ethical systems. The most consistent organizational issues were role clarity, time, infrastructure, implementation support, training, and capacity. The most consistent ethical-relational issues were privacy, confidentiality, equity, appropriate technology use, and preservation of human judgment.

Calvert et al. (2022) explicitly analyzed readiness as a combination of motivation and capacity during the pandemic transition. Their findings support a multilevel interpretation: schools with sufficient motivation but inadequate resources may still fail to deliver effective digital support, while resources without organizational commitment may remain unused. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) highlighted role ambiguity and conflict, suggesting that even when counselors are available, unclear expectations can divert them from student support. Villares et al. (2022) similarly showed that patterns of service delivery differed substantially across counselors and were associated with the extent of noncounseling duties.

Thierry et al. (2022) demonstrated that counselor-facilitated implementation of a digital social–emotional learning program can be partly a response to low staff capacity or limited schoolwide buy-in. The study shows that “technology implementation” is not simply a product decision; it redistributes roles and workload. Crandall et al. (2020) identified time as a central barrier, reinforcing the need to treat workload and workflow as readiness variables.

Ethical concerns become particularly visible in studies of virtual and AI-supported practice. Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) reported privacy as a major barrier to virtual counseling. Williams et al. (2024) placed tele-counseling within an ethical decision-making and collaborative consultation framework, especially in contexts involving students with disabilities. Al-Shraifin et al. (2025) identified privacy, bias, AI literacy, user adoption, and human oversight as central to the use of ChatGPT in school counseling. These concerns are connected. A school counselor cannot be considered digitally ready merely because the counselor can operate an AI tool; readiness requires the ability to recognize when a tool should not be used, when sensitive data should not be entered, when algorithmic output requires verification, and when a human counseling response is indispensable.

Equity is another implicit organizational issue. Digital modalities can increase flexibility and access, but they can also reproduce differences in connectivity, device access, privacy at home, disability access, language, and digital literacy. The included corpus did not consistently measure these inequities, but several articles positioned accessibility or collaboration as reasons for adopting digital tools. A readiness model should therefore treat equitable access as a core implementation condition rather than a secondary concern.

Theme 5: Artificial Intelligence and Future-Ready School Counseling

Two included articles explicitly represented the emerging AI dimension. Su et al. (2024) evaluated an AI-supported system integrated with counseling for elementary students with emotional disorders. The system used digital journaling and an AI-driven supportive function to extend reflection and interaction around counseling. Al-Shraifin et al. (2025) focused directly on ChatGPT, arguing that generative AI could provide rapid, personalized

support and reduce routine burdens while emphasizing the need for AI literacy, privacy safeguards, bias awareness, and human oversight.

These studies indicate two distinct AI-readiness roles. The first is AI as a counseling support technology: counselors must evaluate outputs, manage privacy, and preserve human accountability. The second is AI as a developmental context affecting students' academic and career lives: counselors must help students build adaptability and make decisions in environments transformed by automation and digital technology. The current evidence is preliminary, conceptually diverse, and too recent for firm conclusions about effectiveness. Nevertheless, AI expands the scope of hybrid readiness and is likely to become a defining component of future school counseling competence.

Integrated Pattern Across Themes

The themes converge on a multilevel model. Individual readiness concerns beliefs, confidence, resilience, and adaptive communication. Practice readiness concerns the counselor's ability to conduct online or virtual interactions, use digital assessment and data, and combine modalities. Organizational readiness concerns infrastructure, policy, workload, role clarity, support, and implementation capacity. Ethical-relational readiness concerns privacy, equity, cultural responsiveness, relationship quality, and human oversight. These four readiness domains jointly shape the capability to deliver hybrid school counseling as an intentional integration of face-to-face and digitally mediated services.

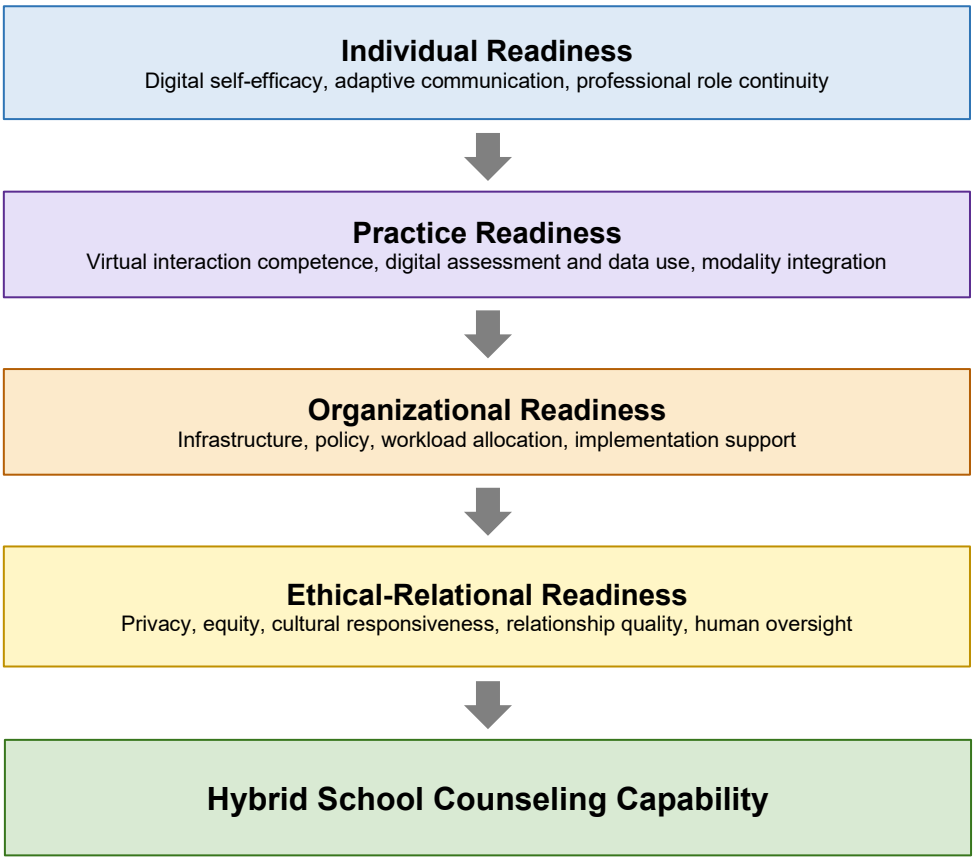


Figure 3. Proposed multilevel model of readiness for hybrid school counseling

Figure 3 presents this synthesis. Importantly, the model is an interpretive product of the scoping review rather than a validated measurement model. Its value is to organize recurrent findings and define testable dimensions for future research.

Table 3. Overlapping themes in the readiness synthesis

Theme	Sources, n	Recurring constructs	Implication for hybrid readiness
Practitioner digital readiness and adaptive competence	7	Digital self-efficacy; attitudes; resilience; adaptive communication; role continuity	Counselors need confidence and adaptable professional skills, not only platform familiarity.
Digitally mediated and hybrid service delivery	10	Virtual counseling; web platforms; flipped guidance; digital counseling models; modality flexibility	Readiness includes selecting and combining modalities according to student need and counseling purpose.
Digital assessment, data, and program infrastructure	5	Online assessment; data systems; interactive media; digital SEL; AI-supported journaling	Readiness spans the full counseling workflow, including assessment, documentation, data interpretation, and follow-up.
Organizational and ethical conditions	8	Role clarity; time; capacity; training; privacy; equity; collaboration; human oversight	Individual competence must be matched by secure systems, policy, support, and ethical governance.
AI and future-ready school counseling	2	Generative AI; AI-supported reflection; future of work; AI literacy; bias/privacy	AI readiness requires critical evaluation, privacy protection, explicit human accountability, and student guidance about technological change.

Discussion

This scoping review mapped 16 Scopus-indexed articles published from 2019 to 2025 that met strict criteria for recent Article-type publications and substantive relevance to technology-mediated school counseling. The literature has expanded from early attention to online assessment, data use, flipped guidance, and digitally responsive counseling toward pandemic-era virtual service delivery and, more recently, AI-supported counseling and future-of-work concerns. The central finding is that “digital readiness” is not a single skill. The evidence supports a multilevel construct composed of individual readiness, practice readiness, organizational readiness, and ethical-relational safeguards. A second major finding is more cautionary: while digital, online, and virtual counseling are increasingly studied, hybrid school counseling remains weakly operationalized as a distinct service model.

From Emergency Remote Counseling to Intentional Hybrid Practice

The pandemic literature is essential because it revealed what happens when modality changes faster than professional systems can adapt. Savitz-Romer et al. (2021) and Villares et al. (2022) showed that counselors were expected to maintain academic, social-emotional, and career support under conditions of remote or hybrid schooling, but their capacity to do so was shaped by role ambiguity, competing duties, and organizational constraints. Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) demonstrated that counselors could adapt their communication and benefit from flexibility while simultaneously experiencing privacy and

training problems. These studies are often interpreted as evidence about online counseling, but their broader contribution concerns adaptive capacity.

Emergency remote practice, however, should not be equated with hybrid counseling. Emergency practice is reactive: it adopts available digital channels because ordinary contact is disrupted. Hybrid practice should be prospective: it decides which elements are best delivered face-to-face, synchronously online, asynchronously, through digital assessment, or through technology-supported follow-up. This distinction has methodological implications. Studies of pandemic-era online counseling show that digital delivery is possible and identify barriers, but they do not establish whether a planned hybrid pathway is superior to face-to-face, online-only, or ad hoc multimodal practice.

The literature therefore points toward a design problem that has not yet been adequately studied. A hybrid school counseling model needs decision rules. High-risk assessment, crisis response, confidentiality-sensitive disclosure, or complex relational work may require direct human contact and may be safer face-to-face when feasible. Psychoeducation, routine follow-up, scheduling, certain assessments, progress monitoring, career information, and some structured interventions may be efficiently supported digitally. The appropriate distribution cannot be predetermined for all settings, but the principle is important: readiness involves modality judgment, not maximum technology use.

Digital Self-Efficacy Is Necessary but Insufficient

Akgül and Atalan Ergin (2022) provide the clearest direct evidence that digital self-efficacy matters. Counselors with stronger digital self-efficacy had more favorable attitudes toward online counseling, and resilience was also relevant. This supports the inclusion of self-efficacy in any readiness measure. Yet the rest of the corpus shows why self-efficacy alone is inadequate.

A counselor may feel confident using video platforms but lack competence in adapting counseling micro-skills to reduced nonverbal information. A counselor may be comfortable with online assessment but lack knowledge of data security or appropriate interpretation. A counselor may be highly competent but unable to implement digital services when institutional rules are unclear, student devices are unavailable, or workload does not allow appropriate follow-up. Conversely, a counselor with moderate confidence may perform well in a highly supportive organization with secure tools, training, supervision, and clear protocols.

The conceptualization of readiness should therefore distinguish perceived capability from demonstrated competence and from environmental capacity. Perceived capability can be measured through self-efficacy scales. Demonstrated competence requires performance-based tasks, scenario judgments, observed simulations, or validated knowledge assessments. Environmental capacity requires organizational indicators. A future instrument that collapses all of these into a single self-report score would risk obscuring the mechanism that needs intervention.

Practice Readiness Extends Beyond Video Counseling

A common mistake in digital counseling discussions is to treat readiness as proficiency with synchronous video counseling. The present corpus shows a wider practice ecology. Ifdil et al. (2019) focused on online assessment; Crandall et al. (2020) on data-driven decision making; Suryawati et al. (2024) on interactive web-based counseling media; Thierry et al. (2022) on a digital social–emotional learning platform; Gading et al. (2025) on digitally

delivered counseling models; and Su et al. (2024) on AI-supported reflection and counseling communication.

Consequently, a digitally ready school counselor needs a portfolio of competencies. These include digital communication, online assessment, information management, data interpretation, content curation, accessibility, digital psychoeducation, platform selection, remote engagement, documentation, cybersecurity awareness, and AI literacy. The counselor also needs the professional judgment to decide which digital function is appropriate for which student and purpose.

This breadth suggests that professional development should be competency-based rather than tool-based. Training counselors to use a particular videoconferencing platform may solve an immediate operational problem but does not prepare them for future platforms or new digital contexts. Training should instead target transferable capabilities: evaluating tools, protecting confidentiality, adapting communication, interpreting data, identifying risk, selecting modality, and maintaining boundaries. Tool-specific instruction can then be added as a local implementation layer.

The Relational Core of Counseling Must Be Preserved

The strongest argument against uncritical digitization comes from the relational dimension. Hidayat and Usanto (2024) reported that digital platforms improved access and supported student well-being but were associated with a weaker interpersonal relationship than face-to-face counseling. Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) described the need to refine communication because counselors could not rely on ordinary interaction patterns. Al-Shraifin et al. (2025) emphasized that AI should supplement rather than replace human counselors.

These findings reinforce a key principle: digital efficiency and counseling quality are not synonymous. A system may improve speed, reach, or convenience while degrading privacy, empathy, continuity, or perceived safety. The purpose of hybrid design should not be to maximize digital contact. It should be to allocate digital and in-person resources in a way that protects the relational functions that make counseling effective and ethically defensible.

This has implications for outcome measurement. Studies of digital school counseling should not evaluate only usability, satisfaction, or symptom change. They should also measure therapeutic alliance or working relationship, student trust, perceived confidentiality, engagement, continuity, dropout, help-seeking, accessibility, and appropriateness of modality. For AI-supported services, additional outcomes should include perceived transparency, accuracy, harmful advice, bias, counselor workload, and the proportion of AI interactions requiring human correction or escalation.

Organizational Readiness Is a Core Part of Counselor Readiness

Calvert et al. (2022), Savitz-Romer et al. (2021), Villares et al. (2022), Thierry et al. (2022), and Crandall et al. (2020) collectively show that digital transformation is organizational. Role clarity is particularly important. When counselors are burdened with noncounseling duties or when digital programs are introduced without explicit ownership, technology can increase rather than reduce workload.

For this reason, readiness assessment should occur at two levels. The first is the counselor level: knowledge, skills, attitudes, self-efficacy, and ethical judgment. The second is the school or district level: device and network infrastructure, secure platforms, technical support, policies, supervision, data governance, workload, referral pathways, crisis protocols, and leadership support. A hybrid counseling initiative should not be judged “ready” when only one of these levels is prepared.

The evidence also suggests that organizational readiness is dynamic. A school may become more ready through experience, training, policy development, and allocation of resources. Calvert et al. (2022) observed rapid capacity development during pandemic disruption. This points to the usefulness of staged readiness models. Schools could be classified as emerging, developing, operational, or optimized, with different technical and professional benchmarks at each stage. Such a model would be more actionable than a binary ready/not-ready classification.

Ethics, Privacy, and Equity Need Operational Standards

Ethical concerns appeared repeatedly but were not measured consistently. Privacy was explicit in Jaber and Al-Hroub (2023) and Al-Shraifin et al. (2025), while Williams et al. (2024) emphasized ethical decision-making and collaboration. These issues will become more complex as counseling systems incorporate apps, cloud services, automated transcription, analytics, and generative AI.

A readiness framework should therefore include operational ethics. Counselors should be able to identify what data a platform collects, where data are stored, who can access them, how long they are retained, whether inputs are used for model training, and whether students can meaningfully consent. They should understand the limits of confidentiality in remote settings and have procedures for verifying identity, managing interruptions, responding to crisis disclosures, and documenting digital interactions.

Equity must be assessed at the same level of specificity. A service may technically be available online but practically inaccessible to students who lack private space, reliable connectivity, suitable devices, language access, disability accommodations, or digital literacy. Hybrid counseling can mitigate some inequities because face-to-face alternatives remain available, but it can also deepen inequality if digital routes become the default for students with the fewest resources. Readiness therefore requires the ability to offer modality choice without creating second-tier services.

AI Changes the Meaning of Digital Readiness

The AI-related studies are few but strategically important. Su et al. (2024) show that AI can be embedded into a structured counseling-support system, while Al-Shraifin et al. (2025) emphasize generative AI as a potentially responsive but ethically complex supplement.

The emergence of generative AI means that digital readiness can no longer be conceptualized solely as technology adoption. Counselors need AI literacy, but AI literacy in counseling should differ from generic prompt-writing skills. It should include understanding model limitations, hallucination risk, bias, data privacy, automation bias, explainability, and the boundaries between informational support and counseling judgment. Counselors must know when an AI-generated response is unsafe, developmentally inappropriate, culturally insensitive, or outside the role of the system.

Human oversight should be specified rather than treated as a general principle. For example, schools could define categories of AI use: administrative support, resource drafting, psychoeducational content, career-information synthesis, nonclinical self-reflection prompts, and student-facing conversational systems. Each category can have different approval, disclosure, data, supervision, and escalation requirements. Future research should compare these use cases rather than evaluating “AI in school counseling” as a single intervention.

Implications for Counselor Education and Professional Development

The evidence supports a shift from basic technology training toward a developmental digital counseling curriculum. At the preservice level, counselor education should include at least four clusters of competence. The first is digital foundations: platform evaluation, cybersecurity, privacy, digital communication, and accessibility. The second is online counseling practice: adaptation of counseling microskills, rapport formation, boundaries, crisis management, remote assessment, and documentation. The third is data and digital program competence: online assessment, interpretation of dashboards, progress monitoring, outcome evaluation, and responsible use of digital learning or SEL platforms. The fourth is AI literacy: critical evaluation of generated content, bias, privacy, disclosure, human oversight, and ethical decision-making.

These competencies should be taught through performance tasks rather than lectures alone. Simulated virtual sessions can assess communication and boundary management. Case scenarios can test modality selection and ethical judgment. Digital assessment exercises can test data interpretation. AI simulations can test whether counselors detect inaccurate or inappropriate outputs. Supervised field experiences can then integrate these competencies in real school settings.

For in-service counselors, professional development should be modular and responsive to baseline readiness. Counselors with low self-efficacy may need supported skill-building and guided practice. Counselors with adequate technical skills may need advanced training in ethics, data, AI, or hybrid case management. Leadership training should occur in parallel so that organizations develop policies and workloads that make competent practice possible.

A Research Agenda for Hybrid School Counseling

The largest research gap is the absence of clearly operationalized hybrid school counseling models. Future studies should define hybrid counseling prospectively. A model should specify which service components may occur digitally, which require face-to-face contact, how modality is chosen, how transitions occur, and how records and risk information move across modalities.

Second, psychometric development is needed. A hybrid counseling readiness instrument should be multidimensional and should undergo content validation, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, reliability testing, criterion validity, and measurement invariance across counselor groups and contexts. Based on this review, candidate dimensions include digital self-efficacy, online counseling competence, digital assessment/data literacy, AI literacy, ethical and privacy competence, accessibility/equity competence, adaptive communication, modality decision-making, organizational support, infrastructure, role clarity, and implementation capacity. Importantly, counselor-level and organizational-level items should not be forced into one undifferentiated factor.

Third, future research should test outcomes beyond acceptance. Comparative studies could examine face-to-face, online-only, and hybrid models using matched or randomized designs where feasible. Outcomes should include student well-being, access, wait time, engagement, alliance, confidentiality concerns, completion, satisfaction, crisis escalation, counselor workload, and cost or implementation burden. Hybrid models may be most useful not because they outperform face-to-face counseling on every outcome, but because they maintain quality while expanding access and continuity.

Fourth, the geographic evidence base must expand. The concentration of studies in the United States and Indonesia is informative but insufficient. School counselor roles

vary across countries, and digital infrastructure, privacy law, cultural expectations, staffing ratios, and family involvement can change the meaning of readiness. Cross-national studies and measurement invariance analyses would help distinguish universal dimensions from context-specific requirements.

Fifth, full-text systematic searching should be expanded beyond Scopus. The present corpus is useful for mapping a targeted set of records, but a mature review should include additional databases such as ERIC, PsycINFO, Web of Science, and discipline-specific sources. Search strings should explicitly cover school counseling, digital competence/readiness, online and virtual counseling, hybrid service delivery, AI, digital assessment, and implementation. Gray literature may also be valuable for professional standards and school-system guidance, although it should be clearly distinguished from peer-reviewed evidence.

Practical Synthesis: A Four-Domain Readiness Framework

Figure 3 summarizes the review's practical contribution. The proposed framework treats hybrid school counseling capability as the product of four interacting domains. Individual readiness concerns the counselor as a learner and practitioner: digital self-efficacy, attitudes, resilience, openness to technology, and adaptive communication. Practice readiness concerns what the counselor can do: conduct virtual sessions, use web-based assessment, interpret data, manage digital content, use AI critically, and select modalities. Organizational readiness concerns what the system enables: infrastructure, secure tools, leadership, training, role clarity, time, technical support, supervision, and implementation processes. Ethical-relational safeguards concern what must not be lost during digital transformation: privacy, confidentiality, equity, accessibility, cultural responsiveness, human oversight, and relationship quality.

These domains should be assessed jointly because weakness in one can compromise the others. A highly competent counselor in an insecure system is not ready for hybrid practice. A well-funded school with poorly trained counselors is not ready. An efficient AI platform without privacy safeguards or human oversight is not ready. Readiness is therefore better understood as a system capability than as an individual trait.

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered. First, the review was based on a supplied Scopus export rather than a de novo search performed within this review. The exact original Scopus search string was not present in the CSV. The identification set is therefore reproducible only from the supplied 100 records, not from the database query itself. Before journal submission, the original search string should be added if it can be recovered from the Scopus search history. Second, screening and evidence charting were based on bibliographic metadata, titles, and abstracts. Full texts were not systematically obtained or screened. Some studies may therefore have contained relevant school counseling components that were not visible in the abstract, and some included studies may have methodological details that would modify the present interpretation.

Third, only Scopus Document Type Article was included, in accordance with the requested criterion. This improves consistency but excludes potentially important reviews, book chapters, professional standards, conference proceedings, and implementation guidance. The decision is appropriate for the present review question but narrows the evidence map. Fourth, no formal critical appraisal was conducted. The included sources vary substantially in design strength, and conceptual papers cannot be compared directly with empirical studies. Findings are therefore interpreted as a map of reported concepts

and patterns, not as pooled evidence of effectiveness. Fifth, theme coding involved interpretive judgment. The themes overlap by design, and article counts within themes should not be read as effect-size evidence. Finally, citation counts and publication patterns reflect the state of the supplied export on August 9, 2026 and will change over time.

CONCLUSION

Recent school counseling literature shows a clear transition from isolated technology use toward broader digital transformation. Online assessment, web-based guidance, virtual counseling, digital program delivery, data systems, and AI are increasingly part of the school counseling landscape. Across these forms of practice, readiness emerges as a multilevel construct rather than a narrow measure of technical proficiency. Digital self-efficacy and adaptive competence matter, but so do professional role continuity, data literacy, organizational support, workload, privacy, equity, and the preservation of human relationship quality. The most important gap is conceptual and empirical: the field frequently studies digital components, yet it rarely defines or evaluates hybrid school counseling as an intentional integration of face-to-face and digitally mediated services. This gap creates a clear agenda for future research. Hybrid counseling models should be explicitly specified, multidimensional readiness instruments should be psychometrically validated, and comparative implementation studies should evaluate both counseling outcomes and system feasibility. The evidence mapped in this review supports a four-domain framework of individual, practice, organizational, and ethical-relational readiness. Together, these domains provide a rigorous basis for assessing preparedness for hybrid school counseling. Digital transformation should not replace face-to-face counseling or maximize technology use; it should create flexible, accessible, ethically governed services in which technology extends professional capacity while human judgment and relationships remain central.

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