

Competency Level of the Counselor in Secondary Schools in Malaysia

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the level of competency among the counselors in the secondary schools in the Perak State, Malaysia. The research was carried out by means of a questionnaire survey to investigate the competency level of the counselors in the state of Perak which involved 25 tasks of a school's counselor. The sample comprised of a total of 39 counselors with 23 female counselors and 16 male counselors. The questionnaire survey was prepared by the researcher based on the validity of Cronbach alpha value of .914 which involved questions on Personal Details and the Competency Level of the Counselor. The accumulated data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social & Science (SPSS) version 17 in the form of descriptive analysis and percentages. Descriptive analysis was used to measure the competency level of the counselors based on the 25 tasks of a school's counselor. Result shows that the overall competency level of the counselors are moderate (64.16%).

Keywords: competency of schools' counselors, 25 tasks of schools' counselors

INTRODUCTION

Counseling is a process of systematic relationship to help a client based on psychology principles by a professional counselor in order to bring out changes, enhancement and adjustment in the client's personal being, by voluntarily and for life long, which is good and comprehensive in line with the counseling ethics (Gladding, 2003 in '*Kemahiran Bimbingan dan Kaunseling*', 2009). In other words, it is a systematic process to aid relationship based on the psychology principles practised by a registered counselor according to the counseling ethics in order to achieve changes, improvement and adjustment which are holistically good, and carried out voluntarily by the client, so that the achievements would be a life long practises (in The Counselor Acts 1998, 2003).

According to Abdul Malek Abdul Rahman et al. (2013), in 1996, there was a report on the specification and responsibilities of a school's counselor. Referring to the KP (BS-HEP) 8543/60/(91) circular from the Ministry of Education dated 18 March 1996, there are three main functions of a school's counselor, which involved the (1) academic guidance (choosing subjects, studying skills, placement); (2) career guidance (career's interest inventory, career information and choices); and (3) psychosocial and mental health (personality development, psychosocial skills, self-defense skills). Schools' counselors have 22 responsibilities of activity which involve program planning and implementation, counseling session, consultation and staff's network.

The Ministry of Education of Malaysia 2008 (in 'Pengurusan Dan Pentadbiran Perkhidmatan Bimbingan Dan Kaunseling Di Sekolah-Sekolah Menengah Negeri Perak Tahun 2012') have outlined the guidelines on the guidance and counseling as well as the roles of a counselor in the curriculum which involve four main aspects, namely academic, career, psychosocial welfare, and family. There are 25 tasks or duties for a counselor to fulfill and these tasks involve guidance, counseling, consultation, or coordination. The details on the roles of the schools' counselors are (1) to plan for the annual program and activities for the Guidance and Counseling services in the school; (2) to identify the needs for guidance and counseling services through research, questionnaires, interview and discussion with the students, teachers, management, staffs, parents and former students; (3) to plan, oversee, and update the students' records and inventory; (4) to collect, supervise, and to inform the students about the information on guidance and counseling by using any suitable media; (5) to manage and implement the activity of guidance and cluster counseling, and to coach (instructional) the students in order to achieve optimal progress; (6) to plan, implement and supervise the individual guidance and counseling services with professionalism and ethic; (7) to plan, implement and supervise studying skills activity for all student; (8) to plan, implement, supervise and evaluate the program and activity of information distribution on the open certificate package offer and the requirements of the institute for higher learning education; (9) to become a committee member of the drug, inhalant, cigarette, alcohol and HIV/AIDS prevention programs; (10) to plan, implement, supervise and evaluate the programs and activity to prepare and expose the students to the information and chances to further studies in the institute for higher learning education within the country or oversea; (11) to plan, implement, supervise and evaluate the programs and activity of consultation and reference services related to guidance and counseling, career, and the education on drug prevention; (12) to plan, implement, supervise and evaluate the programs and activity for conferences with parents, teachers, non-teacher staffs, government and non-government agencies that are involved in the education and development process of the students; (13) to review the activity modules, instrument, and professionalism of the guidance and counseling services offered in the school; (14) to plan, coordinate and review the resources of the guidance and counseling services; (15) to become the secretariat to the Coordinating Committee of the Guidance and Counseling Services; (16) to become the main coordinator in the in-house training program to spread the knowledge and understanding, and to enhance the professionalism of the guidance and counseling services in the school; (17) to offer crisis counseling to the students, teachers, staff and parents; (18) to act as the personnel in relating to other schools and other related agencies; (19) to become an ex-officio member of the curriculum committee and parent-teacher committee of the school; (20) to become a member in the Planning Council of the School, the Discipline Board of the School, as well as the Board Committee/Prefect Body; (21) to become a coordinator in the mentor-mentee program of the school; (22) to become a coordinator in the student's enhancement programs, co-curriculum, motivation program, self-success and leadership camp, as well as courses on polity; (23) to become the secretariat to the Safe School program, Compulsory Education Policy, Mathematics and Science in English, and Additional Language Policy, and the Placement Committee (Admission) of Students; (24) to become the coordinator of the programs organized by the Guidance and Counseling Unit under the State's Department of Education; and finally (25) to carry out the duties as appointed by the head of department over time.

According to Charmaine C. Williams (2006), every details and knowledge acquired by the counselors including all relevancy, are useful and practical in every different situation in determining the competency level of the counselors. As such, what remains unanswered is whether the school's counselor has successfully carried out every listed task to the best quality? What about the issues on counselors failing to fulfill their duties; has it improve or worsen? Is the achievement of the school's counselor impressive or is it efficient, functional, practical and showing

full awareness on their tasks? This review can be done by looking into the files, the implemented activities, the active involvement, as well as inspection from within or outside of the school.

This research intends to contribute to the Department of Guidance and Counseling whether in the university, college, training college for teachers or the Ministry of Education Malaysia. The findings will show the competency level of the counselors in the schools of the Perak State, hence, enable the Guidance and Counseling Department to seek better alternative or plans to prevent the problem resulting from the competency level of the school's counselor.

Besides, this research is important to the Guidance and Counseling Department particularly in the field of education as it shows the school with counselors of higher level of competence where the trainee counselors can be train and at the same time, become effective and flexible teachers.

Referring to the letter from the Education Department of Perak, titled '*Pengurusan Dan Pentadbiran Perkhidmatan Bimbingan Dan Kaunseling Di Sekolah-Sekolah Menengah Negeri Perak Tahun 2012*', with the reference number: J.Pel.Pk.(HEM) 5128/5/7/Jld.II dated January 2012, all teachers appointed as full time counselors are to be exempted from teaching duties with schedule in order to ensure maximum service of Guidance and Counseling in the school.

This research involves only the counselors of the secondary schools. This is an exploratory research using questionnaire, and 30-40 counselors were selected as samples in the research. Besides, the survey was carried out in a few secondary schools in the area of Hilir Perak of the Perak State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the competency level of counselors is relative new around the globe. Nevertheless, the competency of counselors isn't any new as it is closely related to culture, ethics and so on. A growing number of researches from all over the world are now looking into the competency level of counselors and various cultures from many aspects. To name a few, in cross-cultural research: the validity and reliability of the experiences inventory instruments in an intimate relationship and its' application in the aspects of ethnic and gender; cross-cultural communication or competency, teaching and learning: an analysis, the relationship between counseling competency and the personality of counselors in the secondary schools in two different towns in Peninsular Malaysia. However, there were a few studies which resemble the current research.

The method utilized in the current research is the Choice Theory and Reality Therapy (CTRT). CTRT was introduced by William Glasser who was born in Cleveland Ohio, California on 1925 (Ahmad Jazimin, 2007 in Sapora Sipon & Ruhayah Hussin 2008).

Referring to Choice Theory, anyone suffering in emotion and behavioural problem can be treated with Reality Therapy. According to Glasser, the basic psychological needs of human were divided into five parts, namely 'survival', 'love and belonging', 'power', 'fun' and 'freedom'. If anyone fails to achieve or fulfill any part of these needs, there is bound to be self-dissatisfaction as they fail to make the best decision in their life. Besides, Choice Theory involves a 'Quality World' where everyone build their own inner album with pictures showing their specific needs and wishes containing the exact objects on how they would like to fulfill those needs in the best possible way. If those needs are not met, they failed to fulfill their own needs. This related closely to this research

in which the competency level of a counselor is thus tested from satisfying or fulfilling the needs of the client. The client might experience changes in their feeling, emotion, and behaviour which is satisfying based on the competency of the counselor.

The iceberg model explains the concept of competency towards an iceberg. An iceberg shows only one out of nine of its volume on the water surface and the rest of it stays in the water. Like wise, competency has a few components which are visible like knowledge and skills whereas the other behavioural components like attitude, traits, style of thoughts, self-image, etc remains hidden under the water surface.

Local studies were looking into the issues of the competency of the counselors. Based on the previous studies, it is hard to find study that reflects directly onto the level of competency of the counselor. However, there were several studies done locally on the issue of counselor's competency and various cultural.

Amongst the studies is one by Raudhah (2007) titled 'The relationship between counseling competency and the personality of the counselors in the secondary schools of two towns in West Malaysia'. Counseling competency consist of seven dimensions of knowledge (assessment, various cultural and social counseling, cluster counseling, program review and research, career development, human development and growth, and professional identity) and four dimensions of skills (eyes contact, body language, vocal quality, and tracing the plot); whereas personality consist of eleven dimensions of personality trait, TAJMA (assertive, analytical, openness, self-confidence, leadership, identity, concerns, intellectual, achievement, integrity, and dissonance). Using simple random sampling method, 127 counselors from 56 secondary schools in Georgetown and Johor Bahru were selected as respondents. Three sets of questionnaires were used to measure the competency levels of knowledge, skills, and the personality of the counselors based on demography traits (gender, race, marriage status, level of education, working experiences and license).

In the study of relationship between understanding, awareness and practices of confidentiality ethics among the counselors by Mohamad Bokhari, Syed Najmuddin Syed Hassan and Rosli Saadan (2012), confidentiality is an issue involving ethics and legal implication for the psychologist. A counselor can deem guilty legally with failure of practices if the counselor failed to manage a client with violence threat. It is also because client emphasizes a lot on confidentiality.

Besides, Florence Fletcher (2007) had looked into the relationship between the level of emotional intelligence with the level of work satisfaction as well as the level of working commitment of the counselors in the secondary schools in Kuching, Sarawak. Her study focused onto the relationship between emotional intelligence (Intrapersonal and Interpersonal) with the level of work satisfaction and the level of working commitment among the counselors of the secondary schools in Kuching, Sarawak. Simple random sampling method was used and 40 counselors were selected as respondents.

Meanwhile, Jaclyn Tan Siew Yean (2009) has looked into the relationship of the level of competency of the counselors and students of various cultures in the schools. This study also intended to find out the differences of the level of competency of counselors based on gender. It was an exploratory study with descriptive and inference. The samples of the study consist of 96 schools' counselors registered with the '*Persatuan Pelajaran Gabungan Kota Kinabalu Sabah (PPGKK)*'. The Multicultural Counseling Inventory questionnaire by Sadowsky, Taffe, Gutskin and Wise (in Pope, D. & Coleman, H., 1997) was used in the survey.

Abdul Malek Abdul Rahman et al. (2013) in their study 'A Guidance and Counseling Model Practiced Within Malaysian Schools' have found out on how the field of guidance and counseling had started in Malaysia around 1960 and onwards. The needs for guidance and counseling rose with the changes in many aspects brought by the country development. Guidance and counseling in Malaysia were therefore modified from the practises in the United States based on cultures and social of the community in Malaysia.

Amongst the studies from abroad related to competency were those did by Matthews, Lynda and Buys, Nicholas and Randall, Christine and Biggs, Herbert C. and Hazelwood, Zoe (2010) in the study of 'Evolution of vocational rehabilitation competencies in Australia'. According to this study, over a decade ago, there was growth in the presentation of the vocational rehabilitation services throughout the world because by then, every country is seeking constructs to control the expenses related to inability. However, there wasn't much study conducted outside of the United States in relation to this matter. This study reports on the research conducted in Australia to ascertain the present work function and the knowledge of the importance and the volume of provision used in the vocational rehabilitation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out using descriptive analysis. It is an exploratory method using quantitative strategy. The data for the research were accumulated by using questionnaires to explore the competency level of the counselors in the secondary schools in Perak. This research intends to systematically explain the facts and traits of a populations or a field of interest as accurate as possible and based on facts (Sidek Mohd Noah, 2005).

The exploratory research is specific to explore and intensively find out the recent status background and the surrounding interaction of a social unit whether it involve an individual, a group, an institution or an entire community. It also involves the 25 tasks of a school's counselor to assess the competency level of the counselors.

A few secondary schools in Perak were selected as the location to carry out this research. The samples were selected based on certain factors. Some of the factors were whether the school has more counselors from different background, and their years of service as counselor in the schools. Besides, the subjects for this research were selected from the counselors that have previously served in several different schools in Perak as counselors. There were both male counselors and female counselors who were competent counselors. The population of this research would be from the schools in Perak that have given their permission for us to distribute the questionnaires to the school's counselors.

The researchers have utilized the usage of questionnaire which was frequently used in conducting qualitative researches. A questionnaire serves as an instrument or a formal tool to collect data directly from the respondents concerning an issue in the research. The questionnaire consists of two parts: Part A and Part B.

The questionnaire in this study was developed by the researches after a pilot study. The pilot study was earlier conducted in the VIII semester of the 2012/2013 session, which was before the actual research. This was done by selecting three respondents who are counselors from SMK Gombak Setia. These counselors were given the same questionnaire developed by the researches

which consist 25 questions, and result of the SPSS (Statistical Package For The Social & Science, version 17) analysis showing the Cronbach Alpha value of 0.914.

Table 3.1: Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	Item Total
.914	25

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The finalized result of the research was based on the answers from the research samples. The analysis was divided into a few parts which involved discussion of the demography outcome, namely the gender and races as well as the outcome of the competency which were collected from the questionnaires. The results of the analysis were shown in the following tables.

Table 4.1: Samples Total Based on Gender.

Gender	Occurrences (F)	Percentages (%)
Female	23	59
Male	16	41
Total	39	100

Referring to Table 4.1, out of 59 teachers in the area of Hilir Perak, 39 teachers have filled in and returned the questionnaires. These 39 samples were teachers who have worked in several different secondary schools as counselors, which mean 100 percent of the research samples were counselors of secondary schools. There were 23 female counselors, contributing 59 percent of the samples, and 16 male counselors, contributing 41 percent of the total samples.

Table 4.2: Samples Total Based on Races.

Races	Occurrences (F)	Percentages (%)
Malay	35	89.7
Chinese	2	5.1
Indian	2	5.1
Total	39	100

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of different races as respondents of the research. The most is Malay with 35 occurrences and 89.7 percent, and two occurrences each from the Chinese and Indian respectively, each contributing 5.1 percent of the total samples.

Part B –Competency level of the counselors based on 25 tasks of a school's counselor.

Table 4.3 shows the competency level of counselors based on the 25 tasks of a school's counselor. It contains 25 questions describing the tasks as a guidance and counseling teacher.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistic.

Items	Percentages (%)	Min
B1	70.5	7.05
B2	70.3	7.03
B3	71.5	7.15
B4	73.6	7.36
B5	73.3	7.33
B6	73.1	7.31
B7	74.4	7.44
B8	72.1	7.21
B9	61.5	6.15
B10	69.7	6.97
B11	70.5	7.05
B12	70.0	7.00
B13	69.0	6.90
B14	71.0	7.10
B15	70.8	7.08
B16	70.3	7.03
B17	68.7	6.87
B18	68.5	6.85
B19	70.5	7.05
B20	72.3	7.23
B21	67.4	6.74
B22	68.2	6.82
B23	67.4	6.74
B24	55.9	5.59
B25	69.2	6.92

Percentages of the competency level based on the 25 tasks of a school's counselor.

DISCUSSION

This research has recorded the 25 tasks of a school's counselor as listed out by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2008) as guidelines for counselors to carry out their duties in the schools. Besides, the research outcome has also shows the competency level of the secondary schools' counselors in Hilir Perak. The samples total is 39 counselors. Percentage of male counselors is 41 percent with 16 occurrences while female counselors have 23 occurrences with the percentage of 59 percent.

The analyses of the level of competency were categorized into three levels, with the low level, moderate level and high level. Based on the results, the competency level of the overall secondary schools' counselors are within the moderate level with the percentage of 64.16 percent. This is in congruent with the study by Florence Fletcher (2007) who did a descriptive analysis on the emotional competence level, working satisfaction level, and working commitment level of the respondents. The result of her analysis shows a moderate level of competency among the

counselors. Meanwhile, inferences analysis shows that there were significant differences between the emotional competence level with the working satisfaction level and working commitment level.

The findings of this research is reliable because Jaclyn Tan Siew Yean (2009) had studied the competency level of counselors in relation with culture in which it says that the competency level of schools' counselors are high in all four domains, namely skills, knowledge, awareness, and counseling relationship. This is supported by the study of Anne Marie Deffenbaugh (2008) in competence (which is the understanding of death personally, self-care, and feeling witty), theory, definition of sorrow, mourning and complicated sorrow, introduction of efficient support and inefficient support in handling skills, seeking from professional friends to manage reaction to work with client with problem. The research's finding suggested the importance of training on sorrow throughout the career of a counselor, no matter how many years of experiences the counselor has had in this profession, as this would enhance the competency of a counselor.

The study of Abdul Malek Abdul Rahman et al. (2013) support that guidance and counseling has gone through many changes and transformation in the effort to offer efficient and optimum service to the students. Nowadays, student would seek counseling to help them find the solution to resolve problems they face in this globalized modern world. This would also affect the competency level of counselors which is still in the moderate level.

Among the 25 listed tasks, item number seven which is to plan, implement and supervise the studying skill activities to every student has contributed the highest percentage with 74.4 percent. On the other hand, item number 24 which is the task to coordinate the programs organized by the Guidance and Counseling Unit of the State Education Department gets the lowest percentage with only 55.9 percent. This statistics shows some distance between the two tasks. The task with the highest score would be the counselor getting involved in the studying skill activities.

The involvement of counselors in the academic development of students in school is increasingly important. In most schools now, counselors are involved in the process of teaching and learning. According to Malek Muhammad Said (2007) and Abdul Malek Abdul Rahman et al. (2013), the paradigm shift in the service of guidance and counseling in schools had started since 1996 whereby high commitments were expected from counselors. Every guidance and counseling personnel in schools need to gear up their effort and commitment so that the service of guidance and counseling would become one of the comprehensive and smart education component.

This was supported by Rorlinda Yusof, Syafrimen, Noriah Mohd. Ishak and Amla Salleh Kualiti (2010) in their research titled "*Profesionalisme Guru-Guru Kaunseling Dalam Perkhidmatan Pendidikan Kebangsaan*". The finding of their research shows that the counseling service quality was affected by various factors including intellectual, emotional stability and spiritual stability. This was inline with the National Education Philosophy which emphasizes on the importance of a well-balanced growth in a person physically, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and socially. As such, a counselor is more drawn towards the academic task, like studying skill.

The task with the lowest percentage is task number 24 which is to coordinate the programs organized by the Guidance and Counseling Unit of the State Education Department. According to Johari Talib (2009), this task scored the lowest due to several reasons, and it relates closely to the professionalism of the service of guidance and counseling in schools. As has been repeatedly reported and discussed, the competency level of counselors in schools were closely related to the failure of the administrators in coordinating the tasks of counselors. They lack efficiency because

they fail to understand the service of counseling, and counselors were asked to do other task with no relation to counseling, or there could be conflict of tasks because most of the time were used for other tasks and not counseling, with counselors holding several roles or two roles at a time, to teach and to replace other teachers while undergoing conflict of tasks, or facing jealousy from other teachers because counselors teach less (Zuria Mahmud 1998 in Johari Talib, 2009). All these have added onto the workloads of counselors and caused ineffectiveness among counselors, hence, affecting their level of competency to moderate level.

The finding of this research has contributed to the knowledge expansion particularly concerning the competency level of secondary schools' counselors in carrying out the 25 tasks of a school's counselor. Besides, it could be a mean of reference to the counselors, the Department of Guidance and Counseling, School's Guidance and Counseling Unit, Ministry of Education, and other related agencies. As such, the implications of this study were divided into two, namely the theoretical study implication and the practical study implication.

According to Glasser, human's psychological basic needs are divided into five parts, namely 'survival', 'love and belonging', 'power', 'fun', and 'freedom'. If anyone fails to achieve or fulfill any part of these needs, there is bound to be self-dissatisfaction as they fail to make the best decision in their life. The CTRT theory involves a 'Quality World' where everyone build their own inner album with pictures showing their specific needs and wishes containing the exact objects on how they would like to fulfill those needs in the best possible way. If those needs are not met, they failed to fulfill their own needs. This related closely to this research in which the competency level of a counselor is thus tested on the needs and wishes of the counselor. The counselor can sense changes in the client in terms of their feeling, emotion, and behaviour which is satisfying based on the competency of the counselor.

Second is the Iceberg model which explains the concept of competency. An iceberg shows only one out of nine of its volume on the water surface and the rest of it stays in the water. Like wise, competency has a few components which are visible like knowledge and skills whereas the other behavioural components like attitude, traits, style of thoughts, self-image, etc remains hidden under the water surface. This implies that counselors can enhance their level of competency by knowing and learning the tasks which needs to be done. In other words, counselors would never realize their capability or inner competence before trying to complete their assigned tasks.

Lyle M. Spencer and Signe M. Spencer (2008) explain that without an intention, the definition of behaviour is not complete. The aspects of competence which were hidden under the water surface like attitude, traits, style of thoughts, etc would directly affect the way knowledge and skills are used to effectively carry out a work. Therefore, counselors must have positive intentions in carrying out their duties perfectly while enhancing their competency as counselors.

In the practical implication, few things are discussed. Number one is the implication on the counselors in Malaysia, particularly to the schools' counselors. This research helps schools' counselors to know the importance of their duties as the guidance and counseling teachers in the school, in which many issues have aroused criticizing the function of the counselors whether from within the schools or the community. There was tasks-conflict because the administrators failed to understand counseling services, and too much time was allocated for other activities instead of counseling services. Besides, counselors are made to hold several roles or two roles at a time, to teach and to replace other teachers while undergoing conflict of tasks or facing jealousy from other teachers because counselors teach less (Zuria Mahmud 1998 in Johari Talib, 2009). All these have

added onto the workloads of counselors and caused ineffectiveness among counselors, hence, affecting their level of competency to decrease.

There is a need for counselors to be more proactive and take action to enhance their level of competency in carrying out their duties in the schools. Besides, counselors also need to explore into other related issues on how counselors handle certain conflict that would be useful in carrying out their duties and giving counseling to students or other members of other schools.

According to Abdul Malek Abdul Rahman et al. (2013), there is awareness and recognition of the importance of schools' counselors. As evidenced, many universities including the Sultan Idris Education University are offering degree and post-graduate counseling degree and the amount of students enrolling have increased each year. The recognition and support on counseling services approved by Malaysian government in the schools in Malaysia have encouraged the growth and progress of counseling in Malaysia. As a result, the National Counseling Council, Counselors Acts and Counseling Association of Malaysia were established. Counselors must be ethical and professional because their service will continue to impact the personality, academic and career success, as well as development of the students.

As such, on-going training and education must be given to the schools' counselors to further enhance their competency as committed counselors even though they were graduates from college, teachers training college, universities or any institutes for further learning. For example, schools' counselors are encouraged to attend seminars, courses, workshop, or even to seek expert consultation in every fields, and also to be given clear guidelines on their duties. Thus, counselors can enhance their level of competency to higher level.

Moreover, schools' counselors must be given clear explanation to thoroughly understand their tasks as schools' counselors because this is necessary to ensure excellent result through their guidance and counseling services onto the students. As a trainee counselor and an effective counselor, they ought to be able to relate to the roles in the listed tasks by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2008).

The third implication is towards the Guidance and Counseling Unit of the Ministry of Education Malaysia in enhancing the competency level of the counselors with periodic inspection on the schools' counselors. This is done with hope that counselors will always fulfill their tasks to their best effort; therefore, enhancing the competency level of the counselors.

There are some recommendations for future research. Firstly, the present study can be expand with wider population involving counselors registered with the Perak State Department or even involving every counselor in Malaysia, registered with the Ministry of Education Malaysia. Besides, future study can also add on the demography variables which will affect the competency level of the counselors in their tasks. Examples of demography variables are like age, working experiences, status, etc. As such, this study can be explored into depth. Matthews, Lynda and Buys, Nicholas and Randall, Christine and Biggs, Herbert C. and Hazelwood, Zoe (2010) agree that this very same factor has been given a higher value in terms of the importance and occurrences over the counselors undergoing the rehabilitation counselor training compared to others who were undergoing the other training.

Secondly, this study can be expanded by using qualitative method with semi-structure and unstructured interviews. This can be used as an assessment tool to collect useful information to accurately measure the competency of counselors.

Thirdly, future study can also expand on the assessment or review on the competency level of counselors by involving clients or students, or even the administrators in the assessment. The points of view of the students and the administrators in the schools might be different in assessing the effectiveness of the counselors in carrying out their tasks. As such, future study can consider the comparison on the assessment of the competency level of counselors made by the counselors themselves, the students, and the administrators. However, it is important that the future study is not assessed or review by others but by the schools' counselors themselves.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study has exposed the knowledge on the tasks or duties of schools' counselors and the competency level of the counselors working in the secondary schools. Competency level of counselors will greatly influence the personality development of students as counselors ought to give their best service in guiding and counseling the students, while fulfilling their roles as a professional counselor in building a future generation of positive personality.

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