

## THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL COMPETENCES ON COUNSELORS' RESPONSIVE SERVICES

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### Abstract

One of the most frequently provided services by school counselors is responsive service. For this reason, it is very important to understand the performance of school counselors in responsive services and the factors that influence these services. The objective of this study was to obtain a detailed description of school counselors' performance in responsive services, self-knowledge, self-confidence, confidence in others and communication skills in Makassar. A quantitative ex post facto research design was employed. This study involved 128 counselors from public junior and senior high schools in Makassar. The participants were chosen using a simple random technique. The data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics via regression analysis. The study results demonstrate that the counselors' performance in responsive services, self-knowledge linked to responsive services, self-confidence, and confidence in students when conducting responsive services are moderately high. In contrast, the basic communication skills exhibited by the counselors are high. The counselors' self-knowledge, self-confidence, confidence in students, and basic communication skills, respectively, have a favorable influence on the counselors' performance in responsive services. As a simultaneous process, the counselors' self-knowledge, confidence (in themselves and in students), and basic communication skills positively affect their performance in responsive services.

**Key words:** performance, self-knowledge, confidence, communication skills

### Abstrak

Salah satu layanan yang paling sering diberikan oleh konselor sekolah adalah layanan responsif. Untuk itu, sangat penting untuk memahami kinerja konselor sekolah dalam layanan responsif dan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi layanan tersebut. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendapatkan gambaran rinci tentang kinerja konselor sekolah dalam layanan responsif, pengetahuan diri, kepercayaan diri, kepercayaan pada orang lain dan keterampilan komunikasi di Makassar. Desain penelitian ex post facto kuantitatif digunakan. Penelitian ini melibatkan 128 konselor dari SMP dan SMA Negeri di Makassar. Para peserta dipilih menggunakan teknik acak sederhana. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert. Analisis data menggunakan statistik deskriptif serta statistik inferensial melalui analisis regresi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kinerja konselor dalam layanan responsif, pengetahuan diri terkait dengan layanan responsif, kepercayaan diri, dan kepercayaan diri siswa ketika melakukan layanan responsif cukup tinggi. Sebaliknya, keterampilan komunikasi dasar yang ditunjukkan oleh konselor tinggi. Pengetahuan diri konselor, kepercayaan diri, keyakinan pada siswa, dan keterampilan komunikasi dasar, masing-masing, memiliki pengaruh yang menguntungkan pada kinerja konselor dalam layanan responsif. Sebagai proses simultan, pengetahuan diri konselor, kepercayaan diri (dalam diri mereka sendiri dan siswa), dan keterampilan komunikasi dasar secara positif mempengaruhi kinerja mereka dalam layanan responsif.

**Kata kunci:** kinerja, pengetahuan diri, kepercayaan diri, keterampilan komunikasi

## INTRODUCTION

As a profession, school counselors must work professionally, displaying work methods and results of maximum performance or high performance. In connection to the teaching profession, the government has created a certification program for teachers to work more professionally. The execution of this certification program is pursued through training commencing with the term PLPG (Teacher Professional Education and Training) to PPG (Teacher Professional Education). Through all these training sessions, the teachers are expected to be able to carry out their tasks properly and create optimal performance. This strategy is in keeping with the findings (Gudyanga et al., 2015), which demonstrate that qualifications and experience are not sufficient to support the performance of school counselors, so training is needed to assist their performance.

Hooley & Rice (2019) state that the ability of counselor teachers is reflected in the quality of students' learning experiences during the learning or educational process. Professional teachers must possess four abilities/competencies: (1) pedagogic competence, which includes an understanding of students, the ability to design and implement learning, the ability to evaluate learning outcomes, and the ability to assist students in actualizing their various potentials; (2) personality competence, which reflects a steady, stable, mature, wise, noble, and authoritative personality, allowing teachers to serve as role models for students; (3) social competence, which refers to a teacher's ability to communicate and interact effectively with students, fellow educators, education staff, students' parents/guardians, and the surrounding

community; and (4) professional competence, which includes mastery of learning materials broadly and deeply, mastery of school curriculum, mastery of the scientific substance that underpins the instructional material, as well as mastery of the learning structure and scientific method.

School counselors must deal with various challenges and obstacles in fulfilling their responsibilities. According to (2011), school counselors frequently face obstacles include lack of counseling knowledge, inconsistency, poor comprehension of assigned tasks, insufficient time, and poor connections with students. According to the subject matter, the counselor's personal and social skills require attention. Since counselors' training programs have mainly focused on developing professional and pedagogical skills, their social and personal competencies have been neglected. Counselors receive further training in professional and pedagogic competencies, but not in personality development and social competence, which can influence their performance. This condition may explain why many counseling teachers remain having unsatisfactory performance.

Pedagogical, social, and professional competences originate and depend on the teacher's personality. The learning process and teacher-student interaction will be profoundly influenced by the personality qualities of the teacher concerned. As emphasized in the definition of teacher personality competence, having a healthy and balanced personality is the starting point for someone to become a successful teacher. This is consistent with the findings of Lam & Hui (2010) indicating that counseling effective implementation is influenced by the counselor's understanding of their function, the counselor's philosophy and ideas about

education, general education policy, and the school's vision and culture.

Teacher professional development (TPD) that focuses on developing personality competence appears to be relatively scarce because TPD often emphasizes the development of teacher pedagogical and academic (professional) competencies. There are other criteria classified as personal and social. Still, the most intriguing factors, particularly when examined through the perspective of the counselor's performance, are those associated with self-knowledge, self-confidence, confidence in others, and communication skills. These three facets are inextricably linked to the role of counselors, particularly in schools.

Furthermore, Gallant & Zhao (2011) discovered that many students were already aware of counseling services and visited school counselors for particular services. These findings emphasize the critical role of a school counselor in guiding students. The counselor's competences are employed to promote the discovery of students' difficulties, and the answers to those problems define the students' level of satisfaction.

Gibson (1997) explains that individual work performance is influenced by individual components, organization, and psychological variables. In this case, psychological variables referred to include perceptions, attitudes, personality, learning, work satisfaction, and motivation. Individual variables are competences possessed by teachers, including personal and social competences. Paying attention to the personal and social skills that a counselor must possess demonstrates that a counselor needs to develop self-knowledge, confidence, and successful communication as an individual.

Self-knowledge implies that a counselor is aware of themselves. The

counselor must understand what is being done, why it is being done, and the counselee's issues. Counselors with self-awareness demonstrate that they are aware of their responsibilities, needs, flaws, and strengths to do their duties effectively.

Confidence is defined in this section as trust in oneself (self-confidence) and trust in others (students). Self-confidence is faith in one's own abilities and judgment for accomplishing tasks and selecting an effective approach in life. Self-confidence also refers to a person's belief in their ability to cope with an increasingly difficult environment and their ability to trust their decisions or thoughts. A counselor who is confident in him/herself will be capable of fulfilling his/her responsibilities independently.

On the basis of this reasoning, it can be concluded that these factors will either encourage or enable a counselor to perform well, particularly in responsive services.

Based on the explanations above, the problems studied in this study are formulated as follows.

1. What is the self-knowledge, confidence, communication skills and performance of school counselors in Makassar?
2. Does self-knowledge have an effect on the counselors' performance?
3. Does confidence have an effect on the counselors' performance?
4. Do communication skills have an effect on the counselors' performance?
5. Do self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills simultaneously affect the counselors' performance?

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study was designed as a quantitative correlational study that examined counselors' performance in responsive services, self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills, both at the level of competence and the relationship between variables. The research population contained 283 counselors from junior high schools in the city of Makassar, while the sample consisted of 128 counselors, selected using a random sampling technique.

We used a 7-point Likert scale questionnaire to gather data on the counselors' performance in responsive services, self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills. The counselors' performance was measured using six statements that evaluated the counselors' ability in identifying problems, diagnosing problems, designing problem-solving, managing the problems, collaborating with other parties, and meeting the service ethics. The counselors' self-knowledge was measured using five items, which include recognizing needs, recognizing feelings, recognizing weaknesses, recognizing strengths, recognizing anxiety, and recognizing how to overcome difficulties. Self-confidence was measured through five indicators: believing in one's ability, daring to express oneself, having self-control, having an achievement drive, and feeling deserving of success. Communication was measured through four indicators: showing attention, performing the ability to reflect and empathize, and designing a communicative atmosphere.

The data were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. This data analysis technique described the counselors' responsive service performance, self-awareness, trust, and communication skills. The descriptive analysis entailed data processing,

organization, categorization, pattern creation, and data connection. The data were classified into five categories to describe each variable by category: high, moderately high, moderate, low, and extremely low.

Inferential analysis was performed using regression analysis. The purpose of the analysis was to ascertain the relationship between variables. Inferential statistics were used to evaluate hypotheses during the data analysis process. Before conducting the inferential analysis, an assumption test, termed the normality test, was conducted. The normality test indicated that the data had a normal distribution.

## RESEARCH FINDING

### Results

#### *Description of the Counselors' Performance, Self-Knowledge, Confidence, and Communication Skills*

The results of the descriptive analysis on the counselors' performance, self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills are presented in Table 1.

In table 2, counselors had a moderately high level of responsive service performance (54.69 %), a high level of responsive service performance (35.16 %), and a low level of responsive service performance (10.15 %). As per Table 2, the mean score of the counselors' performance was 172.31, with a standard deviation of 26.50. These findings revealed that a few counselors (17 or 13.28 %) obtained a score of 1 SD (198.81), which is above the mean, in responsive services. On the other hand, 53 (41.41 %) counselors achieved a responsive service performance score lower than the mean (172.31), and the lowest counselor responsive service performance score

was sixty-eight. Meanwhile, 58 (45.31 %) counselors have demonstrated "moderate" performance.

**Table 1 The Counselors' Performance, Self-Knowledge, Confidence, and Communication Skills**

		Perform	Self-Know	Confidence	Comm. Skills
N	Valid	128	128	128	128
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		172.312	143.0469	158.8203	121.2891
Std. Deviation		2.650381	23.14380	21.50460	17.28417
Minimum		68.00	42.00	59.00	28.00
Maximum		216.00	175.00	187.00	140.00
Sum		2.214	18310.00	20329.00	15525.00

### *Performance*

Table 2 depicts the counselors' performance in responsive services.

**Table 2. The Counselors' Performance in Responsive Services**

No	Interval	F	%	Criteria
1	183 – 220	45	35.16	High
2	145 – 182	70	54.69	Moderately high
3	107 – 144	9	7.03	Low
4	69 – 106	3	2.34	Moderately low
5	31 – 68	1	0.78	Extremely low
Total		128	100	

According to this analysis, half of the counselors demonstrated excellent responsive service performance, while the majority of counselors demonstrated adequate responsive service performance that should be improved, and a small number of counselors demonstrated below-average responsive service performance.

### *Self-Knowledge*

Self-knowledge is a term that refers to the knowledge that counselors possess in relation to the tasks or services offered in responsive services. The description of the counselors' self-knowledge in Makassar is included in Table 3.

**Table 3 The Counselors' Self-Knowledge**

No	Interval	F	%	Criteria
1	151 – 180	35	27.34	High
2	118 – 150	78	60.94	Moderately high
3	87 – 117	13	10.16	Low
4	56 – 86	1	7.81	Moderately low
5	25 – 55	1	7.81	Extremely low
Total		128	100	

Table 3 shows that in general (60.94%), the counselors possessed self-knowledge as counselors. While 27.34 % of the counselors in this study had adequate self-knowledge as counselors, 25.78 % lacked adequate self-knowledge as counselors. According to the results of the analysis, which used a mean of 143.05 and a standard deviation of 23.14 for counselor self-knowledge, only 19 (14.84 %) teachers demonstrated self-knowledge related to the performance of their counselor duties, with a score of approximately 1 SD (166.19) above the mean. On the other side, twenty (15.625 %) teachers still have a score that is one standard deviation below the mean (119.91).

According to the analysis, 15% of counselors already had a high level of self-knowledge, approximately 16% of counselors had a poor level of self-knowledge regarding the services they provide, and around 69% of counselors had adequate self-awareness but may improve gradually.

### *Confidence*

Confidence in this study refers to representing the counselors' self-confidence and confidence in pupils when fulfilling their responsibilities in counseling practices. The counselors' confidence is described in detail in Table 4.

**Table 4 The Counselors' Confidence**

No	Interval	F	%	Criteria
1	189 - 121	0	0	High
2	156 – 188	86	67.19	Moderately high
3	93 – 155	40	31.25	Low
4	60 – 92	1	7.81	Moderately low
5	27 – 59	1	7.81	Extremely low
Total		128	100	

According to Table 4, the counselors showed a "moderately high" level of confidence (67.19%) in their ability to provide guidance and counseling services, but none of the counselors demonstrated an "extremely high" level of confidence. An analysis using a mean score of 158.82 and a standard deviation of 21.50 revealed that a small fraction (about 12.50%) of the counselors possessed high confidence with a score greater than one standard deviation (190.32) above the mean. Using the same figures, approximately 12.50 % of the counselors reported having a "poor" level of confidence in delivering guidance services, which is only 1 SD below the mean (137.32)

According to the analysis, 12.50 % of the counselors already showed extremely high confidence in performing their duties as counselors, while approximately 12.50 % of the counselors had to enhance their confidence in performing their duties as counselors. Approximately 75.00 % of the counselors, already had a high level of confidence, but need to increase it further to provide better counseling services.

### *Communication Skills*

Basic communication skills include the counselors' capacity to communicate while performing their tasks. The description of the counselors' basic communication skills is included in Table 5.

**Table 5 The Counselors' Basic Communication Skills**

No	Interval	F	%	Criteria
1	120 - 144	95	74.22	High
2	95 – 119	23	17.97	Moderately high
3	70 – 94	7	5.47	Low
4	45 – 69	2	1.56	Moderately low
5	20 – 44	1	0.78	Extremely low
Total		128	100	

Table 5 demonstrates that, while the majority of counselors (74.22 %) have strong basic communication abilities for delivering guidance and counseling services in schools, 7.83% of them reported weak basic communication skills. The findings, based on a mean score of 121.29 and a standard deviation of 17.28, suggest that only a tiny number (about 5 or 3.91%) of the teachers had strong basic

communication skills, with scores over 1 SD (138.57) in the above-the-mean category. On the other hand, approximately 16 or 12.50% of the teachers had poor fundamental communication skills while delivering guidance services, which is one standard deviation below the mean (104.01).

**Table 6 The Regression Test Results for Each Pair of Variables**

No	Variable	Correlation		Regression test		Regression Equation	
		R	R Square	F	Sig	Constant	X1
1	Self-Know	0.600	0.360	70.875	0.000	74.024	0.687
2	Confidence	0.557	0.311	56.802	0.000	63.200	0.687
3	Comm. Skills	0.596	0.355	69.316	0.000	61.515	0.913

According to this analysis, approximately 3.91 % of the counselors already possessed basic communication skills that are considered to be very effective in carrying out their counselor responsibilities, but 12.50 % of the counselors still needed to improve their basic communication skills as counselors. The remaining 85.39 % of the counselors showed adequate fundamental communication skills but need to be enhanced in order to maximize the services provided.

Table 6 shows that the counselors' self-knowledge significantly affected the counselors' performance in responsive services, with a percentage of 36%. The regression equation model is  $Y =$

$74.024 + 0.687 X1$ . In a similar fashion, the counselors' confidence significantly affected the counselors' performance in responsive services, with a percentage of 31.1%. The regression equation model is  $Y = 63.200 + 0.687 X1$ . The counselors' communication skills also significantly affected the counselors' performance in responsive services, with a percentage of 35.5%. The regression equation model is  $Y = 61.515 + 0.931X1$ .

Multiple regression analysis that demonstrates the simultaneous effect of self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills on the counselors' performance is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The Multiple Regression Analysis Result ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	38243.230	3	12747.743	31.014	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	50968.270	124	411.034		
Total	89211.500	127			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Comm. Skills, Confidence, Self-Knowledge

b. Dependent Variable: Performance

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Non-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	40.889	14.478		2.824	.006
Self-Know	.291	.135	.254	2.146	.034
Confidence	.202	.134	.164	1.510	.134
Comm. Skills	.477	.151	.311	3.155	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Perform.

Table 7 depicts that self-knowledge, confidence, and communication skills simultaneously affected the counselors' performance in

### Discussion

A counselor's self-knowledge substantially impacts their performance in responsive services; the higher the counselor's self-knowledge, the more likely the counselor will demonstrate excellent responsive service performance. This is understandable because the self-knowledge alluded to in this study is knowledge about what is being done, why it is being done, the difficulties encountered, and the difficulties encountered by the student/counselor. With this self-knowledge, a counselor can better comprehend the self-perception of the students he or she is assisting. The same abilities can be used to comprehend

responsive services. The regression equation for this hypothesis is  $Y = 40.88 + 0.29X_1 + 0.20X_2 + 0.48X_3$ .

the student, allowing the counselor to develop a positive relationship with him or her. Thus, counselors who possess adequate self-awareness will be capable of understanding students and their problems, enabling them to provide aid in accordance with student needs, thereby demonstrating optimum service process or performance. This argument is supported by Ooi et al., (2018) who revealed that a counselor's performance is correlated with his/her self-efficacy. Counselors' high performance is a result of their increased self-efficacy. Self-efficacy also plays a role in the counselors' enthusiasm (Burić & Moè, 2020). Therefore, this study recommends

the importance of strengthening counselors' self-efficacy.

Similarly, counselors' confidence has a favorable effect on their performance in providing responsive services. This is acceptable because a person's self-esteem establishes and convinces them of their actions. This finding is consistent with Cooper & Yan (2015) research, which discovered that counselors' confidence in their own ability is a predictor of their success in dealing with students' problematic behavior. Accordingly, Nolan & Molla (2017) discovered that teacher self-confidence is a learned skill that may be enhanced through training and mentoring. Thus, training and mentoring are critical components of building counselors' confidence, contributing to their success in pursuing the counseling profession. Additionally, Sadler (2013) suggests using the reflection model to build counselors' confidence.

Self-confidence refers to a person's belief in their own abilities and judgment in carrying out activities and selecting an effective strategy, including confidence in their capacity to deal with an increasingly difficult environment and trust in their own decisions or ideas. Confidence in students indicates that counselors feel that students can make the best choices for themselves, possess developable potential, and the ability to solve current problems. With this philosophy, school counselors are perpetually positive in their guidance of pupils, owning and considering strategies to assist their students. Confidence is critical because guidance and counseling are essentially communication activities.

The following aspect has a strong favorable effect on school counselors' performance: basic communication skills. As we all understand, counseling is a communication process. Counseling is a form of therapeutic communication in and of itself. Thus, counseling will not occur in the absence of a communication mechanism. Naturally, communication

skills will impact counselor performance under these circumstances, particularly in responsive services. This demonstrates that a counselor's performance will be enhanced if they possess effective communication skills. According to (Yeşil, 2010), there is a significant positive association between communication skills and the subdimensions of affection; between communication skills and harmony; and between communication skills and attitudes toward the teaching profession. Thus, counselors' performance can be influenced by the communication component. In relation to the development of teacher competence, (Hunt et al., 2002) emphasize the importance of developing educator communication competence, which includes (1) teacher communication competence in an academic environment, (2) classroom interaction dynamics, (3) the ability to synthesize and communicate instructional content clearly, and (4) an understanding of the ability to analyze and evaluate other people's communications in diverse environments.

Based on these analyses, it can be confirmed that counselors' self-knowledge, confidence in themselves and their students, and basic communication skills, either separately or simultaneously, positively affect their performance in responsive services. In other words, a counselor's ability to provide responsive services is largely determined by his or her level of self-knowledge about the services provided, the level of trust the counselor has in him/herself and his/her students, and the counselor's ability to communicate effectively with his or her students.

## CONCLUSION

The study results showed that the counselors in had a moderately-high level of responsive service performance, a moderately-high level of self-knowledge related to counseling services, a moderately-high level of self-confidence and confidence in students, and a high level of communication skills when carrying out

their counseling services. It was also shown that the counselors' self-knowledge influenced their responsive service performance. The counselors' self-confidence and confidence in students also positively affected the counselors' performance in responsive services. In addition, the counselors' communication skills positively correlate with the counselors' responsive service performance. Finally, the counselors' self-knowledge, self-confidence, confidence in others, and communication skills simultaneously influenced their performance in responsive services.

This study has limitations in terms of sample size and characteristics of urban teachers, and extensive research with bigger sample size is required to corroborate the findings of this study. Furthermore, this study recommends additional research to understand better a counselor's performance and the factors that influence it by delving deeper into gender, age, educational qualifications, domicile, self-development intensity, and the counselor's status as a certified or uncertified teacher.

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