

The Competency of Guidance and Counselling Teachers in Conducting Intervention Counselling for Students

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is essential in increasing the competency of Guidance and Counselling Teachers (GCT) in students' social-emotional development. In addition, a high level of GCT leadership intervention will influence students' social-emotional development. This research is done to observe the relationship between students' social-emotional development and GCT's leadership intervention in the social-emotional development of secondary school students in Selangor. This study utilizes a quantitative research design investigating 350 secondary school counsellors in Selangor. Participants were chosen based on the purposive sampling method on GCT who have handled issues regarding students' social-emotional development and have served for 10 years or more. GCT implements interventions concerning the goals of the students and interventions in the shape of forming a strong relationship with anyone of importance. Lastly, GCT and the students reform themselves towards a better disposition. This research, which can be used as a guide for GCT, has implications for the implementation of the intervention in the social-emotional development of the students.

Keywords: Intervention, Guidance and Counselling Teachers, social-emotional development, students

Introduction

The party responsible for organising programmes involving collaborations between the schools, the parents, the communities, and the authorities is Guidance and Counselling Teachers (GCT). Therefore, the role of GCT is essential in ensuring a well-balanced development of the students. GCT should wisely adopt an effective intervention to avoid any persisting issues. The intervention must open up one's mind and heart, as well as improve the behaviour of those with problems so they get to explore, restore and boost their self-esteem (Ura Pin et.al., 2017). Schools, along with GCT should play their parts and cooperate in

implementing interventions that can reduce the rate of social-emotional development issues among school students.

This research was therefore done to explore the intervention methods used by GCT to overcome issues regarding social-emotional development among school students, identifying how those intervention methods are executed and exploring the influence of said interventions in overcoming social-emotional development issues among school students. This research was done hoping to share this knowledge with the relevant parties to overcome social-emotional development issues among students. Students often face various socio-emotional challenges, including academic stress, relationship conflicts, and personal issues, which can significantly impact their overall development. Recent statistics highlight an increase in poor mental health and behavioral issues among secondary school students, underscoring the urgent need for effective interventions at the school level. The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) reported a rise in the prevalence of mental health issues among school and university students, from 7.9% (424,000 individuals) in 2019 to 16.5% (922,318 individuals) in 2023. In this context, Guidance and Counselling Teachers (GCT) play a crucial role as leaders in supporting students' development, not only academically but also in their emotional well-being. This study aims to address gaps in current practices by focusing on the relationship between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of GCT leadership interventions. While previous studies have broadly examined emotional intelligence among teachers, few have explored its direct impact on GCT leadership competencies, particularly within the Malaysian educational context. By addressing this gap, the study underscores the critical importance of emotional intelligence in enhancing GCT leadership effectiveness and their ability to implement impactful interventions.

Literature Review

Developing the GCT's Emotional Intelligence Intervention in Overcoming Students' Social-Emotional Issues.

The establishment of GCT benefits schools in improving the excellence of the schools and students. With the numerous issues faced by students, however, the role and responsibility of GCT are becoming more complex and challenging as they need to equip themselves with various knowledge, master the appropriate counselling skills, abide by the counsellor ethical code and possess high social skills. These criteria are vital in achieving job satisfaction and subsequently providing appropriate commitment when performing duties and responsibilities.

Recognising the reality of the duties and responsibilities that GCT are required to execute, another aspect that is no less important and necessarily stressed is their ability to manage their emotional intelligence in facing career development challenges. The fact remains that GCT have done the duties bestowed upon them well. Despite that, there are still some GCT who are having trouble in providing their service.

Another challenge in providing efficient service is the lack of emotional intelligence skills. According to Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence is the ability to motivate oneself and to withstand disappointment, control impulses, not exaggerate pleasure, ability to regulate mood and ability to maintain relationships so that pressures cannot paralyse an employee's ability to think and empathise.

The study conducted by Mohd. Najib (2002) prove the importance of a high emotional intelligence (EQ) intervention among teachers and its importance in executing a consultation process with students for an effective education. Rorlinda (2009) through her study concerning emotional intelligence intervention among GCT in Selangor found that GCT obtained a moderate score in four domains of emotional intelligence, which are: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation and social skills. This moderate score is due to the GCT obtaining a low score on the components found in the aforementioned emotional intelligence domain.

Another study related to GCT's emotional intelligence was conducted by Rorlinda, Syafrimen, Noriah & Amla (2010) concerning the emotional intelligence profile of primary school and secondary school GCT in Selangor. The findings show the emotional intelligence level of the secondary school GCT in Selangor are moderate despite the level of emotional intelligence should have been high. The results of the study showed that the GCT who participated had a moderate mean score in the domains of self-awareness, social skills, self-regulation and self-motivation. A study by Goleman (1996) also showed that secondary schools GCT in Selangor also received moderate scores on self-regulation and self-motivation domains.

Apart from emotional intelligence, GCT also need to possess leadership qualities especially if the GCT was entrusted with the position of the head of GCT. Previous studies have also shown that leadership interventions have a significant correlation with emotional intelligence. Individuals with low emotional intelligence cannot become an effective leader. This is because emotional intelligence (EQ) is said to play a vital role not only in the engagement process but also in the leadership process (Gardner & Stough, 2005). The position as the head of GCT certainly has a great responsibility to create a harmonious environment and induce cooperation among colleagues. Apart from having the responsibility to create harmony among colleagues, the head of guidance and counselling teachers also needs to form a harmonious relationship with the administrators, teachers and students.

Emotional intelligence also has a significant relationship between the GCT's level of leadership intervention and the social-emotional development of students. GCT with low emotional intelligence will affect their emotional level and further increase their internal conflict regarding a GCT's leadership intervention in students' social-emotional development. Emotional issues caused by pressure such as anxiety, restlessness, irritability, depression, mood swings, insecurity, high sensitivity, aggressive or hostile behaviour, emotional exhaustion and fatigue. This will negatively affect the implementation of GCT's tasks in schools.

The ability to deal with stress will lead to satisfaction and an increase in work performance, which is all associated with people of high emotional intelligence. Based on the problems above, it is clear that in order to become proficient, GCT need to equip themselves with highly efficient emotional intelligence and also leadership in order to achieve job satisfaction

Research Problem

Recognising the reality of the duties and responsibilities that GCT are required to execute. Another aspect that is no less important and is necessary to be stressed is their ability to manage their emotional intelligence in facing career development challenges. In fact, GCT has done the duties bestowed upon them well. Despite that, there are still a number of GCT who are having trouble in providing their service. Another challenge in providing efficient service is the lack of emotional intelligence skills. According to Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence is the ability to motivate oneself and to withstand disappointment, control impulses, not exaggerate pleasure, ability to regulate mood and the ability to maintain relationships so that the pressure would not paralyze the ability of an employee to think and empathize.

Research Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is formed by combining motivation theories and learning theories as well as the Malaysian Teacher Standard (MTS). This is because the domains are deeply interconnected to one another to guarantee the development of teachers' professionalism. There are two models or theories that serve as guidelines for this research. These three models are the Emotional Intelligence Model of Goleman-Noriah (2006) and the MLATI (Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory) Leadership Instrument by Elmi-Noriah (2013).

Social-Emotional Intelligence Model

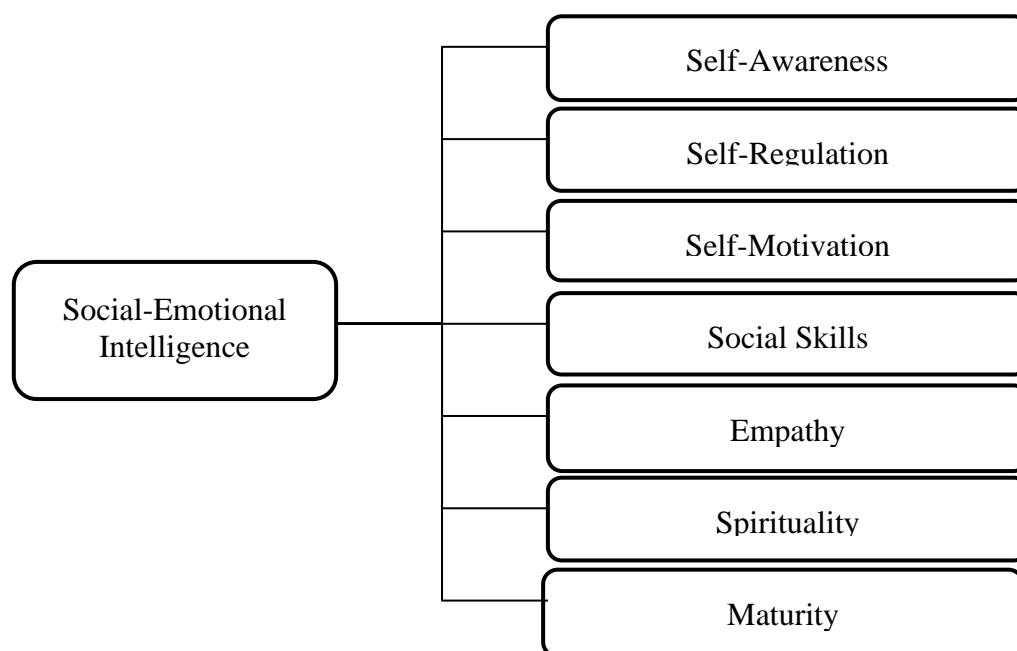


Figure 1: Goleman-Noriah Social-Emotional Intelligence Model (2004)

The figure above shows the domain of socio-emotional intelligence by Goleman-Noriah (2004) which measures the level of emotional intelligence of the secondary school GCT in Selangor. The instrument utilised is the *Inventori Kepintaran Emosi Malaysia (IKEM)*/ Malaysian Emotional Quotient Inventory (MEQI) by Noriah Mohd Ishak et al. (2004). Its domain of emotional intelligence contains 28 subdomains. The domain of self-awareness is the ability to recognise the internal compass which is the choice to be made and identify the resource or intuition in oneself.

The self-awareness domain is divided into 4 subdomains (emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence and intention/thoughts). The self-regulation domain is the ability of a person to assess their inner compass, instincts and resources that exist within oneself. The self-regulation domain is divided into 5 subdomains (self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness). The domain of self-motivation is the emotional tendencies that guide and facilitate a person to achieve any goal.

The self-motivation domain is also divided into 5 subdomains (achievement drive, commitment, initiative, optimism and interest). For the domain of empathy, it is the ability of a person to read and understand the feelings, needs and wants of others. The empathy domain is divided into 6 subdomains (understanding others, developing others’ potential, service orientation, leveraging diversity, political awareness and caring). The domain of social skills is the individual's ability to establish social relationships, negotiate, resolve problems and conflicts well.

The social skills domain contains 8 subdomains (influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, relationship building, collaboration and teamwork skills). The spiritual domain is the individual's ability to appreciate the value of religion in facing everyday problems. Lastly, the maturity domain is the individual's ability to solve problems or make decisions based on rational thinking.

Guidance and Counseling Teacher Leadership Intervention Model

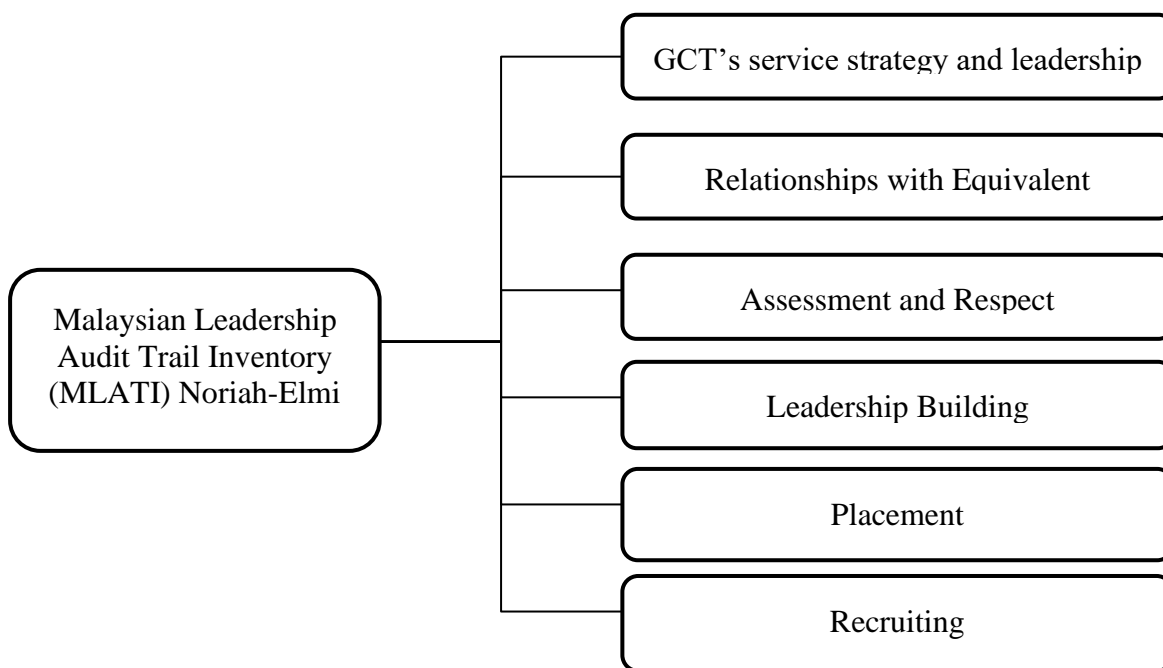


Figure 2: Leadership Intervention Model (Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory (MLATI) Noriah-Elmi (2013))

Based on Figure 2, there are seven components that measure and discuss the guidance and counseling teacher’s leadership intervention level. The seven components are a) Service

Strategy and Leadership Model which measures the GCT's ability to design their leadership model that is consistent with the needs of the schools and the expertise of the GCT under their leadership, b) Recruit which measures the ability of the head of GCT to select and identify expertise available among their colleagues.

In this regard, as the head, they need to have a benchmark in selecting which colleagues to be granted with the responsibility of handling the counseling programs based on the expertise they possess, c) Assessment and Respect which is to measure the ability of the head of the guidance and counseling teacher to make performance evaluations and give appreciation to the GCT under their leadership and also to the students, d) Placement which is measuring the GCT Head's ability to ensure that each of his colleagues is given their respective roles in implementing the guidance and counseling program.

Each colleague is given space to build leadership interventions by executing tasks that have never been performed and the challenges in tasks given should be considered as a challenge and experience for them from time to time, e) Leadership intervention building which is measuring GCT's ability to give opportunities to their colleagues to attend courses for leadership development, f) Engagement and retention which is to measure GCT's ability in trying to ensure that the hearts of the students and counselors under their leadership are won so that they remain loyal to the school organization.

Relationship with Holders/Stakeholders which is to measure GCT's ability to ensure good relationships with all stakeholders including the principals, school administrators, teachers, colleagues and students are always good and harmonious.

Methodology

Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach and data analysis using the SPSS software version 20.0, IKEM- MALAYSIA emotional intelligence questionnaire by Goleman-Noriah (2006) and the Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory (MLATI) by Noriah-Elmi (2013).

Sample and Population

The population of this research consists of Full-Time GCT who serve in all secondary schools in the state of Selangor. They are Counseling Teachers appointed by the School Division of the Malaysian Ministry of Education Act 1996. They serve in 226 schools in ten districts in Selangor. The appointment as the Head of the GCT is through the appointment by the principal based on the longest serving period while some school principals practice the appointment of the Head of the GCT according to the rotation system.

To select the sample, the simple random sampling technique is used and the researcher has adapted the basic techniques (elementary sampling marble from a jar) in Neuman (2003) starting by preparing a list of the names and the total of the Head of Guidance and Counseling Teachers in ten secondary schools in Selangor which brings the number to the total of 168 people. To ensure that the name of the Head Counseling Teacher in each district can produce an estimate of the sample size required for the research, the voting process is carried out repeatedly until it is considered that the estimated number of samples is obtained.

80% of the total sample is selected for each district, making a total of 168 people involved in this research. Therefore, the total sample of students in ten secondary schools in Selangor's district is Hulu Langat (23 people), Gombak (22 people), Kuala Langat (11 people), Kuala Selangor (14 people), Petaling Utama (20 people), Petaling Perdana (31 people), Sepang (7 people), Klang (23 people), Hulu Selangor (11 people) and Sabak Bernam (6 people). In terms of gender, 51 of the guidance and counseling teachers are male and 117 of the guidance and counseling teachers are female.

Research Instrument

a) Malaysian Emotional Quotient Inventory MEQI-MALAYSIA

Malaysian Emotional Quotient Inventory MEQI-MALAYSIA Goleman-Noriah (2006), contains 187 items that measures the seven domains of emotional intelligence on a 5-point Likert scale. The seven domains are (a) self-awareness, (b) self-regulation, (c) self-motivation, (d) empathy, (e) social skills, (f) spirituality, and (g) maturity.

b) Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory (MLATI)

The inventory based on the leadership model of Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory (MLATI) Noriah-Elmi (2013) has 69 items that measure seven leadership components on a 5-point Likert scale. The seven domains are (a) Service Strategy and Leadership Model, (b) Recruit, (c) Placement (d) Leadership Building (e) Assessment and Respect (f) Engagement and Retention, and (g) Relationships with Equivalent Holders/Stakeholders.

c) Job Descriptive Index

The instrument modified from the 'Job Descriptive Index' developed by Smith, et.al. (1975), contains 30 items that measure six components of job satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale i.e. current job situation, salary, supervision, co-workers, promotion and side job.

Validity and Reliability

MLATI (Malaysian Leadership Audit Trail Inventory) instrument by Noriah-Elmi (2013) was used for the first time in the context of a counseling teacher's career. The results of the pilot test conducted by researchers in 2013 produced a trustworthiness value of 0.804. This shows that the leadership questionnaire can measure the leadership components.

The emotional intelligence instrument IKEM -MEQI by Goleman-Noriah (2006) which has been tested numerous times by previous researchers produced a trustworthiness value of 0.9768. Lastly, a pilot test was conducted among the Head Teachers of Guidance and Counseling for the job satisfaction instrument of the Jobs Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith (1975) and the result of the Cronbach Alpha value obtained was 0.753.

Data Analysis

The data obtained was analyzed based on the research questions and hypothesis. The mean and the percentage of the descriptive statistics are used to observe the level of emotional intelligence and leadership intervention of the secondary schools GCT in Selangor. The analysis of Pearson Correlation r is used to observe the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership interventions of secondary school GCT in Selangor.

Findings

*Emotional Intelligence Profile of Middle School Guidance and Counseling Teachers in the Districts of Selangor**Table 1**Emotional Intelligence Core Components Profile*

EQ Domain	EQ Sub Domain	Percentage (%)
Self-Awareness	Emotional Awareness	88.04
	Accurate Self Assessment	88.59
	Self-confidence	87.86
	Honesty	87.14
Self-Regulation	Self-control	85.53
	Trustworthiness	90.14
	Responsibility	90.35
	Adaptability	91.09
	Innovativeness	88.92
Self-Motivation	Achievement Drive	84.85
	Interest	85.29
	Commitment	88.68
	Initiative	86.33
	Interest	85.29
Empathy	Leveraging Diversity	86.11
	Service Orientation	85.33
	Understanding Others	82.13
	Developing Others' Potential	81.16
	Caring	82.02
	Political Awareness	80.76
	Understanding Others	82.13
Social Skills	Conflict Management	84.25
	Leadership	82.85
	Influencing People	83.76
	Other Communication	75.80
	Change Catalyst	80.56
	Building	80.33
	Relationship	80.00
	Collaboration	
	Teamwork Skills	77.97
Spirituality		83.82
Maturity		84.86
Average Index		85.49
Percentage		

a) Critical Components

Seven components have a moderate level of efficiency or are categorized as critical components, namely helping others (79.73%), political awareness (80.76%), change catalyst

(80.56%), relationships building (80.33%), collaboration (80%), teamwork (77.97%) and communication (75.80%).

Table 2

Emotional Intelligence Critical Components Profile

EQ Sub Domain	Percentage (%)
Helping Others	79.73
Political Awareness	80.76
Change Catalyst	80.56
Relationships Building	80.33
Collaboration	80.00
Teamwork	77.97
Communication	75.80

This means that out of the twenty-eight components studied, twenty-one of them are core components and there are seven critical components for the group of guidance and counseling teachers in this research.

Leadership Intervention Profile of High School Guidance and Counseling Teacher in Selangor

Table 3

Percentage Score and Mean Score of Guidance and Counseling Teacher's Leadership Intervention

Factor	Mean	Percentage	N (168)
Service Strategy and Model Leadership Intervention	42.54	85.07	
Recruit	28.12	80.34	
Leadership Building	29.08	72.70	
Placement	24.18	80.61	
Engagement and Retention	63.73	74.97	
Assessment and Respect	32.14	80.35	
Relationship With Equivalent Holders/ Stakeholder	45.83	70.01	
Total	265.63	77.79	

Based on table 3 above, it was found that the guidance and counselling head teachers of secondary schools in Selangor have a high level of leadership for the Service Strategy and Leadership Model components (85.07%) while the other leadership components are at a moderate level. The component with the lowest level is the Relationship with Equivalent Holders/Stakeholders (70.01%). The leadership component that obtains a score between 81% to 100% is at a high level while a score between 61% to 80% is at a moderate level. A score of 41% to 60% is at a low level. A score of less than 40 is considered very low. The overall leadership value index score is 77.79%. This shows that the guidance and counselling teacher's leadership level is moderate.

There Is No Significant Relationship Between The Emotional Intelligence Of Guidance And Counseling Teachers With The Leadership Intervention Of Guidance And Counseling Teachers In Secondary Schools In the State of Selangor

Table 3

Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence And Leadership Intervention

Variables	Leadership
Emotional Intelligence	0.248
Significant	.001
N	350

Significant at the level of $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows the existence of a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership intervention among secondary school guidance and counselling teachers in the State of Selangor which is $r[350]=0.248, p=.001$ ($p < 0.05$). This means that the higher the level of emotional intelligence of the guidance and counselling head teacher, the higher the level of leadership.

Discussion

Emotional Intelligence Intervention Profile of Secondary School GCT in the State of Selangor

The results of the study show that overall, the intervention of Secondary School GCT in the State of Selangor has a high level of emotional intelligence efficiency which exceeds the score of 81% and above for all components of emotional intelligence which are self-awareness (87.91%), self-regulation (99.21%), self-motivation (86.19%), social skills (83.97%), empathy (82.46%), spirituality (83.82%) and maturity (84.86%). The overall value index for emotional intelligence is 85.49%. The results of the study on the self-awareness efficiency component, self-regulation, self-motivation and social skills, were found to be contrary to the results of studies related to emotional intelligence conducted on teachers and counselling teachers by Rorlinda (2009), Rorlinda, Syafrimen, Amla a.l Noriah (2010). However, the components of empathy, spirituality and maturity are found to be consistent with the research of Rorlinda (2009) and Syed Najmuddin (2005)

Core and Critical Components of Emotional Intelligence Intervention for The Head of Guidance and Counseling Teacher in the State of Selangor

The results of this research shows that out of 28 sub-domains of emotional intelligence, 21 sub-domains are categorized as core components and seven sub-domains are categorized as critical components. The 21 sub-domains that exceed the percentage score of 81% and above are emotional awareness (88.04%), self-assessment accuracy (88.59%), self-confidence (87.86%), honesty (87.14%), self-control (85.53%), trustworthiness (90.14 %), responsible (90.35%), adaptability (91.09%) and innovation (88.92%), achievement drive (84.49%), interest (85.29%), commitment (88.68%) and initiative (86.33%), leveraging diversity (86.11 %), service orientation (85.33%), understanding others (82.13), developing the potential of others (81.16%), caring (82.02%), conflict management (84.25%), leadership (82.85%) and influencing others (83.76) %. The results of the study on the sub-sub-domains of honesty, responsibility, reliability, adaptability, innovation, interest, commitment, service orientation, leadership, caring and developing the potential of others were found to be consistent with the results of Rorlinda's study (2009).

Seven components have a moderate level of efficiency that is helping others (79.73%), political awareness (80.76%), change catalyst (80.56%), relationship building (80.33%), collaboration (80%), teamwork (77.97%) and communication (75.80%). The results of the study show that the subdomain of catalyst for change, communication, building relationships was found to be consistent with the results of the study conducted by Rorlinda (2009).

Leadership Intervention Profile of The Head of Guidance and Counseling Teacher in Secondary Schools of Selangor

The results of the research revealed that the head of guidance and counselling teachers of the Secondary schools in Selangor have a high level of leadership competency for the Service Strategy and Leadership Model component which is 85.07%. This showed that the head teacher of guidance and counselling has a high level of competency in terms of program management that aligned with the vision and mission of guidance and counselling. The result of the research was contrary to a news article concerning the notion that guidance and counselling services in schools are facing an issue regarding leadership quality and can be interpreted as ineffective due to the vague goals, mission, and poor program administration. The weakness in service management may raise the issue of a lack of competency and efficiency among full-time counselling teachers (Berita Harian, November 1, 2007). The result of this research is found to be in accordance with the research by Rorlinda (2009) which shows that counselling teachers have a high level of service orientation and leadership competencies.

Some other leadership components that show a moderate level of leadership are Recruit (80.34%), Leadership Building (72.70%), Placement (80.61%), Engagement and Retention (74.97%), Assessment and Respect (80.35%), and Relationship with Equivalent Holders/Stakeholders (70.01%). The results of the study related to the components of leadership building were found to be contrary to the results of Rorlinda's study (2009) where, through the results of her study, counselling teachers were found to have high competency in building the potential of others. The results of the engagement and retention component were found to align with the findings of Rorlinda (2009) which showed that counselling teachers have a moderate level of relationship building, in addition to communication and a moderate ability to manage conflicts. These incompetencies may result in them having difficulty maintaining therapeutic relationships between peers and students.

A Significant Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and the Leadership Intervention of the Head Teacher of Secondary School Guidance and Counseling in Selangor

The results of the study by Zainatul Azura (2011) aligned with the results of the study among the head teachers of guidance and counselling. The results of the study found that there is a moderately strong significant relationship between emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills) with counselling leadership efficiency (skill efficiency and personal development). This shows that high emotional intelligence needs to be mastered and enhanced in an effort to improve counselling leadership efficiency among counselling teachers.

Cherniss & Goleman, (2001) also stated that emotional intelligence is one of the factors that contribute to the improvement of leadership in terms of the performance and work quality of counselling teachers. The implication of a high level of emotional intelligence in counselling

services in schools involves the ability to counsel teachers to persevere in helping clients despite having to deal with various difficulties. Their behavioral qualities of not easily agitated or distracted in stressful situations, can deal and communicate effectively as well as remaining committed to performing their duties is considered as a counselor with resilient and has a high level of emotional intelligence. The above characteristics also reflect the leadership level of counselling teachers. This shows emotional intelligence has a clear connection with the leadership of an individual.

Conclusion

The results of the study concerning the level of emotional intelligence of the Head of Guidance Counselling Teachers show a high level in all domains. However, as the Head Teacher of Guidance and Counseling, they should show a higher score in terms of competency level compared to ordinary counselling teachers. Of the 28 subdomains of emotional intelligence, 21 of the subdomains were identified as core components and seven of them were identified as critical components. The level of emotional intelligence of the head teacher of guidance and counselling in this research is at a high level. But as a leader, they should achieve a higher level of score than ordinary counselling teachers.

Next, in relation to the leadership component, of the seven components measured, one component shows a high level of leadership, six components show a moderate level. The level of leadership as a whole also shows a moderate level. Concerning the components that measure the level of job satisfaction, of the six components measured, only one component is at a high level, four components are at a moderate level and one component is at a low level. The level of job satisfaction of the Head Teacher of Guidance and Counseling is also at a moderate level. This study makes a significant contribution to the field of guidance and counselling by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of GCT leadership interventions. These findings not only support existing literature but also offer a practical framework for empowering GCT to address students' socio-emotional challenges. The practical implications of this research include recommendations for introducing specialized training for GCT to enhance their emotional intelligence. Such training can help GCT become more effective leaders, capable of addressing students' challenges with a more empathetic and strategic approach. Additionally, these findings can inform education policymakers to refine professional development guidelines for GCT, emphasizing emotional intelligence and leadership aspects. By implementing these measures, this study aims to strengthen the role of GCT as leaders and facilitators in students socio-emotional development, ultimately contributing to the well-being and excellence of the educational system.

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