

Validity and Reliability of Instruments for the Purposes Realization Position of Senior ASSISTANT (COUNSELING)

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Abstract

This article discusses the validity and reliability of items in the questionnaire for the realization the position of Senior Assistant (Counseling) service. This instrument has been developed based on literature review, management involvement, expert views and objective studies. To get the validity of the items in this instrument, the views of six experts have been studied. The reliability of the instrument was measured through the alpha coefficient. The results of the expert validity assessment indicated that all experts agreed with the items, but some adjustments were needed in terms of sentence length and differentiation between action and belief statements. Meanwhile, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.852, the instrument demonstrated high reliability. In conclusion, the items in this instrument are considered valid for measuring the realization the position of Senior Assistant (Counseling) based on expert validity and high reliability values.

Keywords: Realization the Position of Senior Assistant (Counseling), Senior Assistant Counseling, Instrument, Validity, Reliability.

INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling services were introduced into the school system in Malaysia starting in the early 1960s. The services provided at that time primarily focused on career guidance and student counseling. In order to provide career guidance and counseling services in schools, exposure courses lasting a week were periodically organized by the School Division for teachers who carried out counseling duties. The Cabinet Committee Report on the Implementation of the Student Policy (1979) emphasized the importance of further enhancing counseling services in schools, as stated in Perakuan 79.

"Student Guidance and Career Services in schools are to be fully implemented. These services should emphasize guidance activities and not solely career guidance activities."

Guidance and counseling services in schools play a crucial role in assisting students not only in their academic and behavioral aspects but also in planning their futures. Guidance and counseling services have clear functions that are understood by the educational community. Efforts to enhance guidance and counseling services can be planned and implemented to optimize these services in improving educational success. This is aimed at producing innovative and highly skilled human capital in line with the Malaysia Education Development Plan 2013 - 2025.

Guidance and counseling services in schools play a very important role in improving students' self-discipline, career education, personal development, and mental well-being. The functions of Guidance and Counseling Teachers/Guidance Teachers (GCT/GT) in schools go beyond providing professional counseling and guidance services to students; they also assist teachers in cultivating and nurturing moral values within the school community.

Educational Counselor (KP) refers to Education Service Officers who have qualifications in the field of counseling and educational specialization, serving in the Department of Education under the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM), State Education Departments (JPN), District Education Offices (PPD), Teacher Education Institutes (IPG), and Matriculation Colleges (KM). Educational Counselors are registered counselors with the Malaysian Board of Counselors and hold a Practice Certificate under the Counselors Act 1998 [Act 580]. This profession is subject to the Code of Ethics for Counselors of the Malaysian Board of Counselors, as well as the Code of Ethics for Teachers and Civil Servants.

The establishment of this position is based on the Public Service Circular Number 1 of 1999 (Guidelines for Establishing Counseling Services in the Public Sector), Public Service Circular Number 18 of 2005 (Guidelines for the Application of Psychology in Human Resource Management in the Public Sector), Human Resource Service Circular (Psychology Management, Version 1.0 2022), Circular Letter on Psychology and Counseling Services of the Ministry of Education Malaysia Number 1 of 2022 (Guidelines for the Management and Administration of Psychology and Counseling Services in the Ministry of Education Malaysia), and the Directive on Registration of Counselors to All Counselors of Organizations, Counseling Lecturers, and Guidance and Counseling Teachers of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) Who Hold Professional Qualifications, February 5, 2021.

The functions of the Educational Counselor position encompass planning management and administration strategies, providing expert counseling/guidance/consultation/advocacy services to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) community, designing and implementing the delivery operations of psychology and counseling services in the aspects of Developmental, Preventive, and Remedial Approaches (3P), planning and executing the development of educational counselor competencies and quality, ensuring compliance with the Counseling and Psychology Service Quality Standards (SKPKP), and managing service information data through the Counseling Service Management System (e-2PK).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The research objectives are to determine the reliability and face validity, as well as content validity, of the questionnaire on the necessity position of Senior Assistant (Counseling). Specifically, this study aims to:

1. To establish the appropriateness of items with the construct of the necessity of creating the position of Senior Assistant (Counseling) through expert validation.

2. To determine the instrument's reliability by analyzing the alpha coefficient.

INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF REALIZING THE POSITION OF SENIOR ASSISTANT (COUNSELING)

The items for the construct of the necessity of creating the position of Senior Assistant (Counseling) were modified from the MKK-CIP career readiness questionnaire and the Modul 3K-CBT necessity study questionnaire. Since the items measured in both sets of questionnaires are based on career needs and module requirements, the researcher made item modifications based on the components of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) requirements grounded in theoretical models and policies such as;

- a) The Counselors Act 1998 (Act 580); The Code of Ethics for Counselors of the Malaysian Board of Counselors;
- b) The Stoltenberg and Delworth Supervisory Development Model (1987);
- c) Trait Theory of Leadership by McCall and Lombardo (1983);
- d) Malaysian School Governance (MySG) by BPSM, KPM 2020;
- e) The Ministry of Education Malaysia's (KPM) Handbook on Psychology and Counseling Services (BPsk) 2023;
- f) Human Resource Service Circular (PPSM) Psychology Management Version 1.0 2022;
- g) The Malaysian Teacher Standards (SGM) 2.0; Guidelines for the Implementation of Counseling and Guidance Services in Primary and Secondary Schools.

These sources were used as the foundation for modifying the items to align them with the theoretical and policy frameworks relevant to the Senior Assistant (Counseling) role and requirements.

The items for this section are divided into sub-constructs related to the Necessity of Senior Assistant (Counseling) (PKK) as follows;

- a) Enhancing Counseling Service Quality (Items 1-5);
- b) Client Welfare (Items 6-11);
- c) Clinical Counseling Session Supervision Needs (Items 12-16);
- d) Strategic Leadership in Counseling Services (Items 17-20);
- e) Counseling Service Needs for Teachers and Staff, and Parent Consultation (Items 21-26);
- f) Brain Drain (Items 27-30)

All of these items use a Likert rating scale, where (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) somewhat disagree, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree (Schommer 1991). All items are positively worded to describe the necessity of establishing the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer position.

VALIDITY OF CONSTRUCT ITEMS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REALIZING SENIOR ASSISTANT (COUNSELING) SERVICES

The correct approach in designing a questionnaire is critical to ensure its effectiveness in accurately measuring the research objectives. The validity of a questionnaire is an essential aspect in determining the extent to which the instrument truly measures what is intended to be measured. According to Mohamad (2000), the validity of a questionnaire assesses the extent to which the assessment instrument genuinely measures the subject matter under investigation. This means that the questionnaire should refer to the constructs or characteristics to be studied, and each item in the questionnaire should be relevant to those constructs. The validation process may involve expert reviews by individuals knowledgeable

in the research field to ensure that the questionnaire items accurately reflect the intended constructs.

Furthermore, as emphasized by Noah (1997), a measurement is said to have high validity if it can accurately measure what it is supposed to measure. Therefore, the measurement and data analysis processes should also be conducted meticulously to ensure that the results from the questionnaire are consistent and accurate in measuring the desired constructs. In conclusion, questionnaire validity is a crucial step in research as it ensures that the data obtained from the questionnaire is relevant and accurate in addressing the established research objectives.

The validity of a questionnaire is conducted on two crucial parts: face validity and content validity. This is because the quality of any instrument depends on its validity (Litwin 1995). Questionnaire validity ensures that what is intended to be measured aligns accurately, and test scores can be translated correctly and appropriately (Gay L.R. et al. 2006). Therefore, content validity is essential to ensure that the items used are relevant and represent the domains being measured (Wiersma 2000). Similarly, face validity is crucial to update language aspects such as spelling, sentence structure, item appropriateness, explicit item meanings, and writing style (Muijs 2004; Wiersma 2000; Furr 2019).

The primary objective of content validity is to ensure that the items contained in the measuring instrument represent the domains that should be measured. Murphy and Davidshover (2001) mentioned that the procedure for predicting the content validity of a questionnaire consists of three steps, namely describing the content, determining the content area that each measurement item will assess, and comparing the measurement structure with the content structure. Konting (1998) suggested that to enhance the content validity of a measuring instrument, researchers are advised to seek external assessors. External assessors serve as evaluators to ensure that the domains contained in the measuring instrument represent the areas under study. External assessors typically consist of experts in the field related to the subject being studied by the questionnaire creator.

For this purpose, the researcher prepared a validity form to be submitted to the selected panels. The chosen experts consisted of knowledgeable scientists and practitioners in the fields of psychology and counseling, psychology, education, measurement, and assessment. Six experts were consulted to validate each construct, sub-construct, and item used in this study. In summary, all experts agreed to accept all items in the construct of the necessity of Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer position with minor modifications to some items. For the construct of the necessity of Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer position, all experts believed that some items were presented too lengthy and might confuse respondents. Therefore, the researcher made changes in terms of question presentation to make it more concise, by providing specific headings for each sub-construct. For example, for the sub-construct of enhancing counseling service quality, it began with a clear sub-construct division followed by item B2. This was done based on the suggestions provided by the experts after discussions were held.

TRUSTWORTHINESS OF INSTRUMENTS FOR THE REALIZATION OF SENIOR ASSISTANT (COUNSELING) OFFICER SERVICES

According to Gay et al. (2006), the reliability of an instrument is obtained when items can consistently measure what is intended to be measured. Items that can maintain a high level of consistency have a high reliability rate and are not doubted, while items that cannot maintain consistency have a low reliability value and are questionable (Mohd Majid 2000).

The reliability of an instrument is assessed based on the internal consistency of the items that make up the questionnaire. This consistency level is evaluated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This value is based on Kirk's reliability index (1984) as shown in Table 3.3 below:

Reliability Level	Alpha Value
Excellent	0.90 and above
Good	0.80 - 0.89
Acceptable	0.70 - 0.79
Questionable	0.60 - 0.69
Poor	Below 0.60

Table 1.0 Classification of Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Index

Source : Kirk (1984); George, D., and Mallery, M. (2003).

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used to assess the internal consistency of a scale or questionnaire, and the values above represent different levels of reliability based on the alpha value obtained. The reference values for Cronbach's alpha to determine whether an item is reliable and acceptable can vary based on different opinions and factors. Some of these variations are due to the type of instrument. For example, personality instruments tend to have lower Cronbach's alpha values compared to achievement instruments. Other factors include the research purpose, whether the study aims to produce a significant outcome or for exploratory purposes, and whether the study findings affect individuals or groups (Macmillan and Schumacker 2006).

As a result, there are various views and opinions on whether an item can be accepted or dropped based on its Cronbach's alpha value. According to Cohen et al. (2011) and Aiken et al. (2021), a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.80 is considered acceptable. On the other hand, Muijs (2004) and Noah and Ahmad (2005) suggest that a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 is commonly used by many researchers to determine the acceptability of items, especially for items that measure perceptions, attitudes, and personality traits.

Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacker (2006) suggest that a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.65 is acceptable. In addition, according to Sekaran (1992) and Konting (2000), a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.60 is sufficient to retain an item. After analyzing the pilot test data, the Cronbach's alpha value for all items was found to be 0.96. This value indicates very high reliability (Kirk 1984). In conclusion, all items received high reliability values and were acceptable, except for three items that were dropped. The reliability values for each construct and sub-construct are presented in the table below:

Table 2.0 Reliability Values for Each Item of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer Position Requirement

Subconstruct	Number of Items	Alpha Value
PKK's realization of improving the quality of counseling services	5	.925
Student Welfare	6	.788
Clinical Counseling Session Supervision Requirements	5	.930
Strategic Leadership of Counseling Services	4	.799
Needs for Counseling Services to Teachers, Staff and Parents Consultation	6	.775
Brain Drain	4	.831

Total Items**30****.852**

Accordingly, table 2.0 shows a value of Cronbach's alpha 0.852 for this instrument indicating high reliability. In conclusion, the items in this instrument are considered valid to measure the realization of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer Position Requirement based on expert validity and high reliability values.

CONCLUSIONS

The development of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer Position Requirement instrument aligns with the advancements in research related to the field of psychology and counseling. This underscores the significance of this construct in shaping an individual's perceptions and actions. The researcher views this study as crucial in strengthening psychological and counseling services, ultimately enhancing the psychological well-being of students and the KPM (Ministry of Education) community. The establishment of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer position is expected to assist Guidance and Counseling Teachers (GCT) in providing valuable information and supervision, enabling them to equip themselves with relevant knowledge, skills, and techniques for counseling sessions. The goal is to guide students in adhering to school discipline regulations, adapting well to the learning environment, and mastering the delivered instruction.

Furthermore, this position also provides opportunities for Education Counselors and Guidance and Counseling Teachers to enhance their knowledge in the management and administration of psychological and counseling services. The supervisory role can produce trained counselors and GCT professionals well-versed in suitable techniques and theories while adhering to the ethical principles of counseling, enabling them to effectively engage with increasingly challenging target groups.

This study demonstrates that the developed instrument has a high level of reliability and has been endorsed by six expert evaluators. Therefore, the instrument can be utilized to assess the requirements of the Senior Assistant (Counseling) Officer position, addressing gaps in the existing services. However, it remains open to any improvements.

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